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The Week

PRESIDENT Hoover's final refusal to call an extra session of Congress to appropriate money for unemployment relief makes him personally responsible for whatever may happen next winter to the unemployed and their families, and through them to the nation. Senator La Follette's demand that he call the session was based upon a report made by a subcommittee, not of politicians, but of experts, delegated by the progressive conference to investigate the situation. The chairman of this subcommittee was Dr. Isidor Lubin of the Institute of Economics, and its membership included some of those who are closest to the actual processes of relief—prominent social workers such as Lillian D. Wald and Jacob Billikopf, as well as economists. In face of the fact that expenditures for unemployment relief by local charities and municipalities are inadequate to the need (though they have recently been the largest on record) there is a falling off of charitable contributions on account of reduced incomes. Many cities have large tax deficiencies, and many, having devoted to relief all the tax money they can afford, have reached their legal borrowing limits. Nobody knows where the money is to come from to keep the jobless alive. The committee, carefully surveying economic trends, concludes that there will still be nearly 6,000,000 totally unemployed next winter, and that both these and the partially unemployed will, in the third winter of the depression, be almost without resources of any kind. As against this sober warning, Mr. Hoover fatuously trusts that the absence of governmental action will in some mysterious way bring about a revival prompt enough and marked enough to prevent the consequences which the experts foresee. We do not recall that any ruler was ever gripped by a more dangerous paralysis in the face of catastrophe.

THE speech of Mr. Mellon on taxation and the deficit will lead to an extended discussion during the course of which there is much to be said, but we cannot let the making of this speech pass without recording its main significance. It constitutes a confession that the President was wrong in saying taxes would not have to be increased. He may still try to get away with this bluff for election purposes, but we do not see how he can succeed, in view of the pronouncement of his Secretary of the Treasury. The speech also is a recognition that Mr. Mellon and Mr. Coolidge have in the past been wrong—profoundly wrong—in their contention that reduction of the income tax in the higher brackets of the inheritance tax and of the corporation-profits tax—indeed, of all taxes bearing on the rich—would bring prosperity ad infinitum and increase the yield to the Treasury. The New Republic and others were right when they opposed this policy on the ground that a depression was certain to come, and that the correct policy was to keep tax rates at their former level in order to pay off the war debt more rapidly and build up reserves against lean times and future necessities. Mr. Mellon's present alibi—that the exemption of taxpayers on the lower levels has made for wide fluctuations in the yield—may or may not be true. We see no good reason why these exemptions should have been made, since even the persons having the lowest incomes ever subject to the federal income tax were still part of a minority of the whole popula-

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tion occupying the upper income ranges. But it is essential still to tap the sources of wealth where it is accumulated with such excessive concentration.

AS THE necessity to increase taxes is recognized by this rich men's administration, the drive will be to raise the necessary money by levies which bear mainly on those having little income rather than on those having a great deal. We wonder what people in general will have to say to these tactics in view of the figures of income released only a few weeks ago by the Bureau of Internal Revenue. These figures are subject to startling interpretations. For instance, Labor, the official organ of the railroad unions, pointed out recently that the 504 persons having the largest incomes in the United States in 1929 received more money than did the 521,025 railroad workers. The lucky 504 received $1,185,135,330, while the 521,025 received $1,120,710,037. The disparity is more than a thousand to one. The contrast is even more striking if we leave the less skilled out of the railroad figures and consider only those who are often called the "aristocrats of labor"—the conductors, engineers and others actually engaged in train and engine service. In 1929 there were 306,566 of these, and yet the 504 richest men could have paid the total wages of these "labor aristocrats" and still have left themselves an income of $410,000,000 for the year, or a trifle of $800,000 apiece. What does a wage earner think when he reads these figures? The rich will be lucky if he doesn't want to overturn the whole system. To ask him to believe that we ought to tax the poor instead of the rich is to reach the absolute zero of the absurd.

WHEN the Supreme Court refused, by a five-to-four decision, to declare unconstitutional the Indiana law imposing a special tax on chain stores, it adopted the wise policy of refusing to interfere with the taxation powers of the legislature, irrespective of the economic wisdom of the tax. Too often the Court has attempted to enforce its own ideas of correct economic policy by pretending that laws of which it disapproved were contrary to the Constitution. We can be grateful for the action of the Court majority in this case with all the better reason because we dislike the tax in question. It was undoubtedly prompted by the agitation of the independent merchants against the chains; its attempt to penalize the chains will, we believe, be futile in retarding their growth and would be undesirable if it were successful. Nevertheless, the power of taxation must be applied, if it is to be applied intelligently, on the basis of some social purpose or other, and it is well that legislative bodies should have, in so rapidly changing a world, as large a freedom as possible in executing the popular will and in making experiments. It is noteworthy that in this, as in other recent praiseworthy decisions of the Court, what used to be the minority, composed of Holmes and Brandeis, with the frequent adherence of Stone, has become the majority by the addition of the two most recently appointed justices—Hughes and Roberts.

IT HAS become the fashion to say that there is now a liberal majority on the Supreme Court bench; and certainly some of the decisions since Justice Roberts was added to the group which included Justices Holmes, Brandeis and Stone and Chief Justice Hughes, lend color to this view. One of the most important was that in the California "red flag" case, which held the state statute invalid. The new description of the Court does not, however, fit its recent decision in the case of two conscientious objectors seeking citizenship, in which Justice Roberts went over to the conservative side and gave them a five-to-four majority. The applicants for citizenship were rejected on the ground of their unwillingness to bear arms in any and all future wars in which the United States might engage. They take the Kellogg Pact more seriously than does the Supreme Court: Dr. Douglas Macintosh, a Yale professor of Theology and former Canadian war chaplain, merely made the reservation that he would not promise to bear arms "unless he believed the war to be morally justified," and Miss Marie Bland, who served as a nurse with the American army in France, offered to defend the Constitution and the laws of the land "as far as my conscience as a Christian will allow." The majority of the Court, through Justice Sutherland, held that applicants for citizenship must be permitted to make no bargains; the minority, in a dissenting opinion written by Chief Justice Hughes, pointed out that Congress has respected the scruples of conscientious objectors on religious grounds.

THE decision of the Court is of course not a surprising one; perhaps the most surprising aspect of it is that as many as four members could be mustered to take the other side. The majority is in accord with the action in the Schwimmer case, and with the general ideas which have dominated the Court in the past. In any war which Congress may see fit to declare, the lives of all citizens are subject to sacrifice at the government's command. Progressives might swallow decisions like this with better grace if the Court were equally certain about the sovereignty of the State in times of peace—its sovereignty say, over the supposedly inalienable rights of property.

PRESIDENT Farrell of the United States Steel Corporation let the cat out of the bag at the meeting of the Iron and Steel Institute when, in an impromptu speech, he charged that certain companies were cutting wages by "honeycombing" and other devious methods. Any student of the subject can testify that concealed wage cuts by changes of piece rates have been characteristic of American industry even during prosperity; any increase of

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earnings during those years arose not from any high-wage policy, but from increased productivity. It is inevitable that the same methods should be employed during depression, though they drastically decrease the workers' incomes when production is not increasing. The plain fact is that the wage truce is being broken down by constant nibbling, which threatens to become a succession of big bites. The rest of Mr. Farrell's speech consisted of a rambling exhortation against price cutting and a defense of the tariff. It produces the impression that his economic vision is cloudy. For if the drop into depression is characterized, as most economists agree that it is, by all sorts of inequalities between blocs of purchasing power and the market value of the goods produced for those blocs, there is no way out of it except through some readjustment of the price-wage-profits structure. A freezing of both prices and wages in all industries will get us nowhere. Salvation may lie in the tendency of prices to fall more than wages, even if wage cutting cannot be prevented.

IN THE dispute over the aerial maneuvers, a good deal of nonsense is being talked on both sides, but we feel the palm must be awarded to those who are supporting the Army. Their argument runs that when six or seven hundred airplanes go barnstorming across the country putting on a spectacular show over half a dozen of the nation's largest cities, there is no attempt to work up popular interest in the subject of military aviation. It is just practice for the aviators. This argument is so thin that even the military mind ought to reject it. For large numbers of planes to fly in close formation is extremely dangerous anywhere, and doubly so over cities, where not only the fliers' lives but those of some of the spectators are imperiled. It is inconceivable that in wartime there would be any repetition of such a procedure; it is equally inconceivable that the aviators could not have gained experience just as well or better by flying over less thickly populated regions. We can understand how those in charge of military aviation want to create popular interest in their branch of the service; we have seen the Navy spend millions of dollars in the same way. But we wish they would come clean about their purpose.

THE announcement that on November 8 general elections will be held in the Argentine, may possibly allay for a short while the widespread unrest which threatens to overthrow the provisional government of General Uriburu. This growing revolt against Uriburu, which was recently intensified when he voided the elections held in the conservative province of Buenos Aires, where the government forces were disastrously defeated, manifests itself by a tendency among the people to support the Radical party which put the deposed Irigoyen into power in 1928. Dissatisfaction has spread to the army; the navy is overtly rebellious; business men are grumbling about the non-arrival of the prosperity Uriburu promised them; and the wheat producers are clamoring for the high prices he so recklessly assured them would be established in January. Added to this is the growing deficit in the national treasury, the national indebtedness which is rapidly aproaching a billion and a half pesos, the tyrannical suppression of the press and the treatment of hundreds of political prisoners in military prisons. In nearly every way the present government resembles the dictatorship of Rosas. Despotism is not a surprising development in the Argentine, which, in the main, is still dominated by a few large landowners. The economic system is disrupted by the lack of any proper balance between the agricultural and urban population; and traditional bureaucracy enters everywhere into the conduct of national, provincial and municipal affairs. The duration of the provisional government will no doubt be determined by the efficacy of Uriburu's despotic measures in relation to the extent and power of the popular unrest.

THE Prince of Wales's career is a compelling illustration of the way in which feudal institutions sometimes adapt themselves to the needs of a modern commercial state. In the fourteenth century, the heir apparent to the English throne was a knight in black armor, leading other armored knights against the French. In the 1930's, he has been transformed into a salesman extraordinary, responsible for the popularity of Burberrys and braces on Manhattan Island and for the appearance of British motor cars on the pampas. More recently he has exchanged this role for another, that of the man who rises at a directors' meeting to speak unpleasant truths. One day in Birmingham, the next in Manchester, he told an audience of British manufacturers that they would have to revise their methods radically if they hoped to recapture the South American trade. He spoke with pedestrian good sense, saying nothing that had not been said before, but lending the weight of royalty to his good advice, which may possibly be heeded. Therein lies a danger to his future position. The safety of the British throne is exactly proportional to its inactivity. Once it takes a part in shaping national policies, even an excellent part, it becomes exposed to the dangers that beset even the best of politicians.

IN MR. John T. Flynn's article on chain stores in the issue of April 29 of The New Republic, entitled "Do Chain Stores Undersell?" he describes and attacks a survey of comparative prices made by Professor R. S. Alexander of Columbia University. Mr. Flynn states that Mr. Alexander came to the conclusion that in New York "the independents were actually selling cheaper than the chains." This conclusion, however, was reached by a method which Mr. Alexander in a later section of the report stated "manifests symptoms of a dangerous

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invalidity and inaccuracy." By another method, which Professor Alexander concluded is "more reliable, representative and accurate," he found the chains charged prices lower than those of the independents by "somewhat less than 3 percent." Mr. Flynn goes on to check the prices Mr. Alexander had recorded on five articles in independent stores against prices in similar stores ascertained by a new investigation. "My investigator," writes Mr. Flynn, "investigated quite as many delicatessen stores as Mr. Alexander's students did." Mr. Flynn should have written "as many stores in a single district," since the new investigation covered one of Mr. Alexander's districts, not the whole city. Mr. Flynn's investigation shows that on these five articles the delicatessen prices are now, in a time of depression, considerably higher than Mr. Alexander's prices of two years ago. This fact Mr. Flynn says he is unable to account for. Mr. Alexander suggests that it may be accounted for by the fact that his average prices covered the several sizes of each article, while Mr. Flynn's prices may have been obtained only on the smallest or cheapest sizes. We are glad to make amends to Mr. Alexander for the incorrect picture given of his conclusions and methods, and we also note with interest that Mr. Flynn was correct, even according to this survey, in his main contention that the chains sell more cheaply than the independents.

Isolated Again

RESPONSIBILITY for the plight of wheat farmers the world over henceforth lies, as a result of the London wheat conference, on the United States government. As in other international economic affairs, we play a lone hand, and the hand we play in this case prevents all the other nations concerned from taking the action they desire to take in order to help their own wheat growers, and ours as well.

The essential story of what has happened to wheat is a simple one, but many do not understand it because it has taken so long to unfold, and because it has been complicated with so many details.

Wheat is a commodity with an international market. Though it is widely grown, some countries have a deficiency and must import it; while others have a surplus which they must export. Before the War the United States, which had long been a wheat-exporting nation, was sending less and less of her crop abroad, as newer wheat-growing areas were developed. It was in the cards that, as our population increased, we should gradually approach the point of consuming all our wheat at home. But the War suddenly reversed this trend. The supply which western Europe had been accustomed to receiving from the Balkans and Russia was cut off, while blockade and shipping difficulties raised obstacles to the transport of Argentinian and Australian wheat. Output in France and other belligerent nations was curtailed. The results in the United States and Canada were a tremendous demand for wheat, high prices and great expansion of acreage. This condition lasted into 1920.

Then the old sources began to come back into the market. Argentina and Australia came back quickly; restoration of production in the Balkans and the war-torn importing countries was slower; Russia joined the procession last of all. Last year for the first time she had a considerable quantity of wheat for export, and even yet she is not back to her pre-war volume of foreign shipments. Meanwhile wheat acreage in Canada and the United States was scarcely restricted; crops were in some years even larger than before. It is easier to make a wheat grower than to get rid of him, once you have him.

The inevitable consequence of the great increase in supply without a parallel increase in demand has been a downward trend in prices and, in recent years, abnormally large hold-over surpluses which were not marketed at all. The agricultural discontent which accompanied these developments was dealt with in various ways by the several countries concerned. The importing nations had a comparatively easy way out. They could, like France and Germany, maintain domestic prices by levying tariffs on imported wheat. But "protection" could not protect American or Canadian farmers, who sell so much of their crop abroad, and who flood their home markets. In Canada, a coöperative wheat pool, formed to get better prices by collective bargaining, is being overpowered by the surplus it is forced to hold. In the United States, the Federal Farm Board, which rashly attempted to maintain prices by buying up wheat and holding it off the market, has not bought enough greatly to affect the price, but at the same time has far more than it knows what to do with. In both countries advice to curtail acreage has been ineffective.

This was the situation when the conference, representing nations which export 95 percent of the wheat on the international market, met in London. There had been a good deal of agitation against "Russian dumping," though in reality the world surplus arises from the production of all the exporting nations, and there is far more danger from the possible dumping of the wheat held by our Federal Farm Board than from Russia's activities. The Russian delegate proposed that an export pool be formed like that which Thomas L. Chadbourne has negotiated in sugar. Each nation would, under this scheme, be allotted an export quota, the quotas to be decided by agreement. The total wheat offered on the export market would be so restricted as to maintain a pair price. Each nation would receive its proportionate share of the proceeds. This plan would, if effective, end all fears of dumping, whether by Russia, America or anyone else. So compelling was the logic that all the delegates were converted to the plan—except Mr. McKelvie of the United States.

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Mr. McKelvie countered, not by suggesting a plan, but by delivering an exhortation for reduction of acreage. The delegates knew that many similar exhortations addressed to the American farmers had been ineffective. They did not see any reason why this should be more so. Why tackle first the extremely difficult task of restricting acreage when you could begin by the more practical plan of limiting the amount shipped abroad, thus at least safeguarding the export market? The benefit which such a pool would confer on the farmers of each nation would depend on that nation's success in adjusting domestic demand and supply, but at least the international sources of friction would be removed.

Soviet Russia, though she is willing to restrict exports, does not want to reduce acreage; she wants to raise more wheat for her people to eat. The irony is that she is probably the only one of the nations concerned which has sufficient control of production so that she could reduce acreage if she wanted to. But she is also the only one which has sufficient power to control the distribution of income so that she can enable her population to consume all that she can produce—until their wants for bread are satisfied.

It is argued by some that all restriction, whether of exports or of production, is unjustified; that the trouble is not overproduction but underconsumption. There are a lot of hungry people who would eat more wheat if they could get it. Accepting the truth of this contention—with limits, for a given population of the world would never eat more than a certain amount of bread, no matter how rich they were; and the rich as a rule eat less bread than the poor—but still accepting it as having a bearing on the present situation, it constitutes no excuse for the attitude of the United States government. For the Farm Board does its level best to keep prices up by buying wheat and holding it off the market, and by encouraging farmers, to restrict output to a point where our tariff will be effective.

The recalcitrance of the United States alone prevented the attempt to form an international wheat pool, with at least the beginning of a rationalized world market. Though Mr. McKelvie stoutly denied that the Farm Board will dump its wheat, it looks to the others very much as if we intended to do so. Otherwise why should we not agree to the principle of a quota? It is all too evident that the administration insists on being in a good dodging position on this question, as it is on so many others. For domestic political purposes, it wants to be able to blame the wickedness of the foreigners for our farmers' sad state, which it knows will continue. It wants to be able to accuse other nations of not agreeing to restrict acreage. This line would be impossible if it had entered an international arrangement regulating exports. Then there would be no alibi. We should have to face our incapacity to run our own affairs.

A Philippine Minimum

LAST WEEK there was a sudden barrage of "news" in the metropolitan press from Manila. Readers of The New York Times or The Herald Tribune learned that Filipino leaders who have been shouting for complete and immediate independence from the United States have all at once changed their tune. Overnight they have learned what everybody else has known for years —that three-fourths of the Philippine trade is with the United States, that its products come in duty free, and that if the archipelago were suddenly put outside the American tariff wall, the effect would be disastrous. The hullabaloo in Manila is supposed to have been based on cabled reports of an interview with Manuel Quezon, president of the Philippine Senate and head of the Independence Commission, who is now in Washington. Señor Quezon, incidentally, repudiates that part of the interview which suggests a change of heart as to immediate independence, and the Manila newspaper correspondents, while they do not take back their first allegations, are having a hard time to find anyone in the Islands who is willing to acknowledge that the story is true. More important, however, than the source of these statements is the underlying problem.

For several years the advocates of Philippine independence have been receiving aid from a curious quarter—the American producers of competing goods or services. Southern cotton growers would like to see the Philippine products excluded. So would American producers of sugar and tobacco. The dairy industry of New York and Wisconsin competes with imitation butter made by the indefatigable Filipinos from cocoanut oil. Another group whose importance is often not realized is the Pacific Coast workers, who now object to the unrestricted entrance of Filipino workers to the United States, as similar groups did to the Chinese in the seventies and eighties of the last century and to the Japanese shortly before the War.

It is quite possible that these various interests may be strong enough in the next session of Congress to pass legislation for the immediate and complete freedom of the Philippines, the exclusion of their workers and the enactment of almost prohibitive tariffs against their goods. President Hoover would probably veto such legislation, and he certainly ought to. We took the archipelago by force of arms, against the will of its inhabitants. Over a period of three decades we have built up a new economic system there which now depends for its very existence upon exports to the United States. To wreck Philippine industry for the sake of increasing the profits of American competitors would be utterly contemptible.

If fairness to "our little brown brothers" (whom we treat so much more as step-children) were the only objective, settling the Philippine

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question would be easy. Congress should pass a bill providing for complete political independence at the end of a definite term of years, with a gradual transference of all administrative functions to the Filipinos in the meantime. Thereafter, the continued freedom of the islands could be guaranteed by the League of Nations, or by the League and the United States, or by an agreement of the chief Pacific powers. In regard to the economic problem, many competent American economists believe that the Philippines ought not to continue to have the bulk of their trade with the United States, but should turn to nearer markets in the Orient; and certainly we ought not to stand in the way of such a development. This should be achieved, however, not by raising a tariff wall against her, but by doing what we can for the free flow of goods against all international boundaries. Certainly, if we are not willing to set up a customs union with the Philippines, providing for complete free trade, the least we can do is to raise the tariffs gradually over a long period of years to permit the necessary readjustment to be made without complete economic prostration. The New Republic would like to believe that the American people and the American government could rise to this opportunity; but nothing in our past record suggests that we can.

The Tariff Anniversary

WHEN Mr. Hoover signed the Smoot-Hawley tariff bill about a year ago in spite of almost unanimous protest from the economists and much popular opposition, his excuse for doing so was that a reformed Tariff Commission would quickly remedy its stupidities and injustices. Neither he nor Congress, the argument went, was really capable of digging up the facts regarding the 3,300 duties involved. This was a job for experts, and he would see that the experts did their work expeditiously. We had our doubts, but we have been biding our time to see what the result would be.

So far, exactly eleven duties have been changed, or somewhat less than one a month. There have been three increases and eight decreases. Woven-wire fencing of specified sizes coated with zinc before weaving must pay 50 percent ad valorem instead of 45 percent; if coated with zinc after weaving, it must pay 60 percent. Cylinder wires having more than 55 meshes per lineal inch in warp or filling, and fourdrinier wires, suitable for use in paper-making machines, together with a certain type of woven-wire cloth, must pay 75 percent instead of 50 percent. On the other hand, the consumer is relieved of small amounts of the prescribed duty on wood flour (whatever that is—it sounds like the constituent of certain types of sawdust-filled "health" bread); maple sugar; maple syrup; hats, bonnets and hoods of straw, chip, paper, grass, palm-leaf, willow, osier, rattan, real horsehair, cuba bark, ramie, or manila hemp, wholly or partly manufactured, *if sewed;* pigskin leather not imported for footwear; edible gelatin valued at less than forty cents a pound; wool-felt hat bodies; and wool-felt hat bodies pulled. In addition to specifying these changes, the Commission has investigated and specified no change in the duties on ultramarine blue, wool floor coverings n.s.p.f., and smokers' articles. It has specified changes on cherries, sulphured or in brine, and tomatoes prepared or preserved, but these findings have been returned by the President with recommendations for new investigations.

No doubt the Commission has performed heroic labors to get through this much work. We do not wish to belittle its devotion to duty. It has already, in one year, brought forth three or four times as many changes as the former Commission did under the whole Coolidge administration. To make investigations of relative cost of production here and abroad, to hold hearings, and to assess the results of changing costs and prices in so chaotic an economic world, is no easy task. No doubt the duties on some of these same articles ought now to be changed again, if domestic and foreign costs are really to be equalized. Indeed, it might be well to ask the Commission to devote its whole time to investigating and changing the duties on wood flour, or on cherries sulphured or in brine, and meanwhile to create 3,299 other commissions to adjust each of the other duties promptly and continually.

At least the American consumer has received the benefit of such reduction of the cost of living as he can derive when he pours maple syrup over his pancakes or puts on a straw or felt hat. To be sure, he must still pay, if the article is imported, four cents a pound tariff on the syrup, 50 percent on the value of the straw hat, and 55 percent on that of the felt hat. But who can say, after these magnificent concessions, that the President was wrong in depending on Commission revision to lift the colossal burden which the highest tariff in history has placed, not only on the pocketbook of the householder, but on the prosperity of America and of the world?

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An American Policy Toward Russia[1]

IF THERE is one conclusion upon which it would seem all groups of opinion about Russia must agree, it is that the United States has had no consistent policy toward the Soviet Union, and that such a policy is desirable. Our diplomatic attitude of non-recognition is not in fact compatible with the economic recognition extended in commerce and industry. Nor are the embargoes and threats of further political interference with commerce harmonious with the effort to trade. If the U. S. S. R. is to be effectually outlawed, the anti-Soviet propagandists are quite correct that it must be outlawed economically as well as politically and culturally. If it is not to be outlawed, then the only sensible course is vigorously to seek adjustment of the political difficulties, at least in so far as they hamper normal commercial intercourse. Up to the present, our various conflicting actions with regard to Russia have appeared to be built on trivial, prejudiced, misinformed or partial grounds, rather than upon any broad and rational policy.

In discussing a subject concerning which magnificent flights of the imagination are so prevalent, it is important first to get the prosaic facts straight with regard to commerce. Is it, or is it not, to the economic advantage of the people of the United States to trade with the Soviet Union? Is it to our advantage that Soviet Russia should be allowed to trade with the rest of the world?

In the year 1930, the exports from the United States to the Soviet Union were valued by the Department of Commerce at $114,500,000, or 3 percent of our total exports for the year. Our imports from the Soviet Union were valued at $24,000,000, or 0.8 percent of our total imports. We are sending to Russia a larger proportion of our exports than we did before the War, and are importing a smaller percentage of our total from her. Clearly the figures show that, so far at least, Russian trade can neither be credited for prosperity in the United States nor blamed for depression here. Its amount is not large enough in relation to the bulk of our foreign business.

More significant is the fact that during 1930 our exports to the Soviet Union increased 35 percent, while our total exports were declining 27 percent. No other important nation enlarged its purchases here during the depression. So far as the effect of Russian buying has been felt, therefore, it has been a stabilizing influence. According to the latest reports, those for February, exports to Russia have passed those to all other nations except the United Kingdom and Canada.

What do we sell to the Soviet Union, and what do we buy from her? We sell mainly tractors, agricultural implements, machinery of many kinds, electrical equipment, iron, steel and other metals, besides invisible exports such as engineering services. In spite of the relatively small bulk of Russian purchases in our total exports, they furnish a substantial market for these industries. I suppose no one would argue that we are being injured, in a material sense, by this business.

Our imports from the Soviet Union consist mainly of raw or semi-manufactured materials. In the order of their importance they were, for the year ending September 30, 1930, according to the figures of the Amtorg Trading Corporation, undressed furs, anthracite coal, manganese ore, sausage casings, pulpwood, lumber, rags for paper stock, flax, caviar, fish, licorice root and bristles. These comprise 96 percent of our Russian imports.

Surely nobody is alarmed about the competition of Russian sables, foxes or ermine, nor will our industries be ruined by imports of caviar or licorice root. The cries of anguish have come chiefly from producers of anthracite coal, manganese ore, pulpwood and lumber.

The main facts about the anthracite imports from Russia are, briefly, that in 1930 they constituted about one-quarter of the total anthracite imported into this country, and less than one-seventh of one percent of the total American anthracite production. The prices paid for Russian anthracite were somewhat higher than those paid for the domestic product, the Russian coal being reputed to be of better quality. If the American anthracite monopoly, which for so many years held the householder at its mercy, cannot now withstand the importation of less than 200,000 tons of coal from the Donetz Basin, it must be in a bad way. Such competition is really too trivial to deserve a moment's consideration, whether as producers we fear it or as consumers we welcome it.

American manganese producers really do have to meet Soviet competition. Russia has long been one of the chief sources of high-grade manganese, having supplied a little under half of the world's requirements before the War. American production before the War furnished not more than 2 percent of our needs. During the War, Russian and other shipments were practically cut off, and by 1918 the American producers, under pressure, furnished 38 percent of our supply. Then imports from other sources began to bulk large again. The domestic

[1] This is a somewhat abbreviated version of a paper read in Philadelphia before the American Academy of Political and Social Science. It is here printed by permission of the editors of The Annals of the Academy, in which it will appear in full.

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industry maintained a much larger output than in the pre-war decade, but still was unable to keep anything like its emergency volume even before Russia came back into the market in 1922. Russian imports have grown until they now supply about the same share of the demand as in pre-war days. It is difficult to imagine anything else happening if Russia had remained under a capitalist economy. American steel manufacturers buy manganese from Russia, just as they buy manganese from Brazil, British India and the Gold Coast, because they need the material and find the qualities and prices satisfactory.

The imports of lumber and pulpwood furnish another instance of a country with inadequate and dwindling natural resources buying from a country where these resources are plentiful. We are cutting our forests about four times as rapidly as we are growing them. We have begun to note a deficiency, especially in spruce. We import large quantities from Canada; 95 percent of our lumber imports originate there. About 3 percent of our lumber imports come from Russia, and practically all of this is spruce.

Pulpwood is so much in demand for our great output of paper, and we have already denuded so large an area of our formerly wooded hills in order to turn out Sunday comics, that we now must import considerably over half our pulpwood. Most of this comes from Canada, a minor part from Russia and other countries.

The question is whether we should refuse to accept materials which are useful to us, or of which we do not have enough, at the expense of losing markets for the products of domestic industries which are more efficient and which can produce an excess over the domestic demand. Should we, at high cost, strip our forests even more rapidly than we do and consume our deposits of manganese more quickly? Indeed, from the point of view of the national economy, our chief concern ought to be with the fact that the imports of useful goods from Russia are not greater than they are. For, as Wesley Clair Mitchell has written in "Recent Economic Changes," "If we grant that the real goal of economic effort is to secure goods for meeting human wants, it follows that a country's gains from international trade consist of its imports. Exports represent costs—prices paid for the goods desired." An ideal basis for international trade is to pay, in exports which we make more cheaply and abundantly than does our foreign customer, for imports which we make less cheaply and abundantly. This appears to be precisely the case in our trade relations with Russia; the difficulty is that the exchange is not on a larger and more even scale.

Of course the story is not complete unless we include Russian exports which do not enter the United States in appreciable quantities, but compete with our exports in other parts of the world. Wheat is the outstanding example. An attempt was made not long ago to convince the American farmers that dumping of Russian wheat is responsible for their sufferings. What are the facts? According to all reliable statistics, Russian wheat exports are not so large as they were before the War. The Russian crop of 1930 was almost exactly the same as that of 1913, and more of it was consumed at home. The post-war surplus of wheat which has reduced prices was not created in Russia, but in the rest of the world, which, according to the United States Department of Agriculture, produced in 1928, 27 percent more wheat than in 1913. Why blame Russia for expanding production when we have already expanded it enormously and can, under our system, find no way to restrict it? If we succeeded in getting Russia to do what we cannot do ourselves, and persuaded her to withdraw her wheat from the world market altogether, our basic agricultural problem would be no nearer a solution.

The present facts being what they are, it is not surprising that the opponents of trade with Russia lay so much emphasis on fears, accusations and predictions. Prediction regarding the Soviet Union is dangerous, as may be seen from the statement issued on March 21, 1921, by the Secretary of Commerce during the administration of President Harding. This distinguished Secretary of Commerce said:

> The question of trade with Russia is far more a political question than an economic one so long as Russia is in control of the Bolsheviki. Under their economic system, no matter how much they moderate it in name, there can be no real return to production in Russia, and therefore Russia will have no considerable commodities to export and, consequently, no great ability to obtain imports.

We are now being told that exactly the opposite is the case. Russia, instead of being an economic vacuum, is supposed to be an economic high-pressure tank, ready to shoot endless streams of goods in all directions, while accepting nothing in return. It is assumed not only that the Five Year Plan will be wholly successful, but that Russia will be able to build up a machinery of production so powerful that it will dump upon the world a flood of goods, manufactured as well as unmanufactured, sufficient to ruin industry and agriculture in all other nations. These goods, we are informed, will be sold at ruinously low prices, and the ability to sell them cheaply will be maintained at the expense of an impoverished and enslaved working population, kept subservient by a cruel and self-seeking dictatorship.

Let us suppose for a moment that this prediction were to come true. Let us suppose that a nation of slaves were kept busy solely in order to bestow upon the rest of the world an enormous amount of goods sold for very low prices—or, to carry the supposition to its logical and absurd extreme, given away. We should then all become the beneficiaries of the

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supposed Soviet mania to produce without consuming. We should have all the food we wanted to eat, all the clothing we wanted to wear, all the houses to live in, all the cars to ride about in, without having to pay anything for them in the form of exports to Russia. We should be sustained in idleness, at a luxurious scale of living, as the pensioners of the Soviet system. If Russia did not actually give away her exports, she would have to lend us the money wherewith to buy them—since she would be accepting no goods or services in return—and she could not expect any repayment of the money. All the world except Russia would consist of idle rich. This prospect hardly seems to constitute a menace.

I fear, however, that no such good luck awaits the non-Russian world. The chief economic aim of Communism is to raise the standard of living of the masses. This aim it seeks by a thoroughly planned and controlled economy. In Russia the plan was adapted to the special necessities of the country. The nation had been mainly agricultural. While the beginnings of mechanical industry were present before the War, they were not sufficient to supply the population with anything like a high standard of living. Indeed, even the peasants themselves did not consume enough of the food which they raised. Exports of foodstuffs, necessary to pay for the limited imports of manufactured goods, were made, under the old regime, at the cost of the mass of the peasants. The Soviet economic plan is therefore twofold. It is, first, to construct at top speed a modern industrial plant which shall ultimately be capable of supplying the peasants and city workers with as high a standard of living as possible. And, of equal importance, it is also to develop a greatly enlarged agricultural production so that domestic food supplies may be adequate.

Foreign trade is, under the Soviet plan, incidental to the building of this national economy. But for the time being it is a highly important incident. The rapid building of an immense industrial plant and the enlargement of agricultural output both require the importation of large quantities of machinery and materials which Russia is not yet in a position to supply for herself. How can she pay for these urgent necessities? Not by borrowing money, because she cannot borrow except for short periods to facilitate the actual turnover of trade. She can pay only by exporting goods of which she has a surplus beyond her immediate needs, or of which she can create a surplus by means of heroic efforts and self-imposed privation.

Since the Soviet Union must pay for her imports with the sale of her exports, it is clearly to her advantage to get as much for them as possible. She must, of course, compete in world markets, and must balance the yield of a large volume of sales against the yield of high prices, just as any competitive producer must do so. But to suppose that she is deliberately charging low prices in order to ruin the industries of other nations, when she might sell at higher prices, appears palpably absurd. And it is also absurd to suppose that she is directing, or will direct, her precious labor energy to the making of goods for export instead of to the making of goods for domestic consumption, any more than she is compelled to do so in order to buy what is needed to build up her productive system.

It must be remembered that Soviet industry does not have the incentive for dumping which capitalistic industry has. Dumping is usually undertaken for the sake of getting a surplus off the domestic market so as to maintain prices at home. It is basically a restriction of domestic supply in the interest of private profit. Any loss sustained by the dumping concern or industry on foreign sales is more than compensated for by the gain from high prices at home. But Soviet industry, not being primarily interested in profit, but rather in supplying goods as bountifully and cheaply as possible to the domestic population, does not object if the supply of goods increases and domestic consumption is thereby enlarged. If it takes goods out of the domestic market to sell abroad, it does so only in order that other goods, for which it has a greater need, may be brought in.

It is true that at present the Russian population is enduring some privation in order to buy abroad the machinery upon which future production is to be based. The Russian standard of living is nevertheless, even now, reliably reported to be not below that which existed before the War, and even somewhat above it in many respects. We could, if we wished to do so, render it unnecessary for her to export as much as she does, by arranging long-term loans to finance her purchases here. But we should eventually have to accept repayment of the loans in goods or services. This is the usual process in the development of backward industrial nations on a capitalistic basis.

If the Five Year Plan fails, Russia will not be in a position either to sell or to buy. If it succeeds, or meets with qualified success, another five-year plan will follow, and still another and another. Soviet industry, by its very nature, cannot exist without a plan. At the end of each stage of development, granting continued success, the domestic population will be sustained at a higher standard of living than before. It will take two or more five-year plans in succession to bring the average Russian standard of living up to that which existed in the United States before the depression. The present outlook is, therefore, that Russia will for many years to come constitute a market for our machinery, and perhaps for other manufactured products as well, provided we are willing to accept her raw materials in return.

The danger to us in the eventual outcome is, not that Soviet Russia's foreign trade will be unduly enlarged, but that it will unduly contract. Faced

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by a world which is either actually or potentially hostile, she is being forced to plan for an ultimately self-contained economy, depending very little either on imports or on exports. If she achieves the capacity for a progressive increase in her standard of living without foreign assistance, we may conceivably find her sitting securely behind the walls of her system, sustaining her population at a higher level than we do our own and refusing either to buy from us or to sell to us. If we should go hat in hand, asking for some badly needed manganese or timber, she might smile and say, "Why should I let you have it? I do not need anything that you can give me in exchange, and it does not suit my purpose to let you be in debt to me." One of the greatest treasuries of natural riches in the world may be locked up for the Russian people only. And the fault would be our own. Instead of having planned for a rational interchange of goods in a world economy, of which Russia is admitted as an equal member, we shall have thrust Russia away in her corner—which happens to be the largest in area and potentially the most valuable under the control of any single national government.

Though any reasonable examination must lead to the conclusion that it is to our economic advantage to encourage trade with Russia, it is argued that on political or moral grounds we ought not to do so. The immediate political charge is that her exports are, in part or wholly, the product of convict or at least of forced labor. This charge has been denied by impartial observers as well as by spokesmen of the Soviet government. What are the facts? We cannot know by sitting here and reading dispatches from Riga or London. If a similar dispute arose in regard to imports from any country with which we maintain ordinary diplomatic intercourse, the way would immediately be opened through negotiations for authoritative inquiry into and decision of the issue. Does anyone doubt that the same course would be pursued in this case if our national policy were to encourage trade relations?

But the major charge is that the Soviet government is building up a system of which we cannot approve, that the Communists are seeking to extend their influence throughout the world, including the United States, by propaganda, and that they aim at the overthrow of our own government. We must cease altogether, it is argued, giving them the economic support of our trade, so that we may hamper their success at home and abroad, even if we must do so at some present sacrifice to ourselves.

Let us admit at once that the Communists are carrying on an active propaganda against the capitalist governments of the world, just as an active propaganda against their own system is being waged by their opponents in this and other countries. It is difficult to say which of these propagandas is the more mendacious or one-sided. But I think we must agree that both systems will in the end stand or fall by the test of experience, rather than by what is said about them by their more bitter partisans.

Will the Soviet system succeed eventually in offering satisfactions to the population at large? Will it meet the needs of a modern industrialized society? If it does, it will continue to exist. We shall form our opinion of its merits from what it actually does and is. Neither vociferous propaganda nor an attempt to shut off propaganda will prevent us from being interested in and finding out about what is going on in an area occupying so large a part of the earth's surface, and sustaining one hundred and sixty million persons. We do not need to be afraid of propaganda unless we deserve to be afraid of it. If the Soviet system turns out to be better than ours, we shall want to learn from it. If it does not turn out to be better, we need have no fear of the agitation in its behalf. And if it is to fail, it is certainly far better that it should fail because of inherent weaknesses than because its foreign enemies prevent it from succeeding.

Personally, I do not believe that either the Russian system or ours is, in the present stage of development, the final word in economic and social organization. The Soviet system certainly has many faults. And just as certainly, ours cannot be held to be final, when with such magnificent capacity to produce the necessities and luxuries of life, we suffer a long depression characterized by underconsumption, wherein hardships all through the population culminate in the plight of over 6,000,000 able-bodied men and women who have to be supported by charity because there are no jobs for them. Soviet Russia is condemned because it is ruled by a dictatorship. But we also have our dictatorship, which is perhaps equally cruel and certainly is more blind. I refer to the dictatorship of planlessness, the dictatorship of uncontrolled chance, which, without anybody willing it so, plunges us from prosperity to poverty. We mourn the fate of the *kulaks* dispossessed of their land in Russia, forgetting that our dictatorship of competitive private enterprise has recently, in a space of less than five years, forced over 250,000 farmers and their families off the land. We accuse the Soviet government of forcing labor, forgetting that here millions, in spite of their ardent desire for work, are compelled to be idle.

The project of creating some kind of rationally planned economy is an urgent one in this age for all nations, for all sections of the human race. Soviet Russia, in spite of its obvious faults, offers the first experiment the world has ever seen in economic planning on a national scale for peacetime purposes. It furnishes at once a laboratory and a stimulus which may be of inestimable value to the rest of us in tackling the job of planning in our own way.

Certainly no sensible person can be worrying about the imminence of any revolution in the United States. But if we are eventually to avoid the revolution in this country which the Communists fore-

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see, the way may very well be, not to drift into further chaos and misery while pretending that our system is perfect and employing every energy to block the progress of the experiment in Russia, but rather to learn whether we cannot improve and alter our own civilization by peaceable and rational means. An intelligent and broad-minded American policy toward Russia would be based partly on the recognition of the historical value of the Russian experiment—how far a negative value and how far a positive value remains to be seen—as a light upon the problems which we are certainly facing in this country.

Once our steps were turned toward coöperation and enlargement of trade, legalistic, political and technical obstacles could be cleared out of the way. These do not furnish reasons for non-intercourse, but excuses. We say they are insurmountable only because we have not officially wanted them to be surmounted. The truth is that the official policy of non-intercourse originated at a time when it was thought the Soviet government and economy were inherently so weak that they would soon disappear in favor of another regime. Passing years have proved this opinion sadly mistaken. It is time to execute a right-about-face and deal with the reality which exists. We certainly shall not abolish it by ignoring it.

GEORGE SOULE.

The Flaw in the Mechanical House

MR. DOUGLAS HASKELL'S presentation of the standardized house of the future, in The New Republic of May 13, left little to be said about the technical side of the subject. Many parts of the present house are obsolete and inefficient: they will be altered, improved, cheapened, by those modern factory methods which have already contributed so much to the kitchen and the bathroom. Both the criticism of the present house and the positive suggestions are sound: but I cannot share Mr. Haskell's optimism about the final result, for it seems to me that he has left out of account the sadder part of our last century's experience, and, like the engineer, he has accepted the fallacious practice of isolating the technical problem from the social and economic conditions that are bound up with it. Let us consider a few of these difficulties, not by way of refuting Mr. Haskell's notions, but in order to indicate what must be accomplished before the development he predicts will be a blessing and a benefit.

Everyone who considers the mass production of houses is allured by the parallel between the cheap motor car and the possibilities of a cheap manufactured house. Mr. Haskell does not push this parallel too far: on the contrary, he hardly pushes it far enough; for he takes for granted that the cheap, standardized automobile is a genuine success. Even from the mechanical standpoint, this notion is only partly true; for one must overlook the fact that the present design of automobiles ignores all that science has discovered about wind resistance: but when one takes account of the entire social situation, the rapid production of cheap motor cars during the last twenty years has been a stupidly wasteful process, precisely because the mechanical and financial elements are the only ones that have been treated.

The automobile descended upon a world that was adapted to the horse-and-buggy and the railroad train. Misled by the fact that the original cars were horseless carriages, we set the automobile to work upon our existing system of highways. The result, for thirty years, has been confusion and murder. Lacking sufficient social vision to find a proper pattern for this new method of transportation, we have congested our metropolises and missed half our opportunities for improving the countryside. A high-powered car, capable of 90 miles an hour, can move no faster on Fifth Avenue today than a one-horse shay could have moved fifty years ago. So far from profiting by our experience with the railroad, we have repeated all the mistakes of that earlier development, including grade crossings and routing trunk-line highways through the heart of towns and villages: highway plans like those of New Jersey, which systematically by-pass large centers, are still an exception.

Our failure to coördinate the technical advance of the motor car with an equally bold and advanced scheme of highway planning, industrial decentralization and town planning on a regional scale has left us with a painful accumulation of disabilities. In sum: the efficiency and cheapness of the automobile can be taken seriously only at the door of the factory: once the total situation is considered, one discovers that its possibilities have been wasted and misused, and that its cost, including the annual toll of human lives, is not represented in the prices quoted F. O. B. Detroit.

Now, even in the mechanical parallel between the house and the automobile, the opportunities for improvement through mass production are not quite so great as Mr. Haskell has pictured. The house itself represents only 44 to 60 percent of the total cost of housing; and the part that is now the least efficient and the least standardized, namely, the shell itself, represents only from 20 to 30 percent of the cost. Even when one grants the possibility for large savings both in construction and in labor, the percentage of the total cost involved is not so

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huge as to promise that any large degree of the spaciousness would come in with the mass-produced house.

The reason is simple: the cost of land, the cost of money, the cost of external utilities like water and electricity and gas and sewage mains, to say nothing of the cost of internal improvements like bathrooms, kitchen equipment, garage, radios—the costs of all these items have been expanding ever since the Industrial Revolution. Nothing that is done for the technical improvement of the house will eliminate or greatly reduce them: quite the contrary. Mr. Haskell mentions the possibility, for example, of a combined kitchen and bathroom unit, to be installed in one move: an excellent idea. But who can be naïve enough to think that this will reduce the costs of salesmanship? Is it not obvious that instead of twelve high-pressure salesmen selling twelve different separate fixtures, there will be twelve equally desperate fellows selling twelve different types of combination units? And as long as our present bourgeois standards of taste and luxury remain, there will be the same competitive wastes in stylization, too, that now exist.

One of the happy features of a new mechanically standardized house would be, Mr. Haskell points out, the fact that it could be completely open to sunshine and fresh air. (Let us grant this possibility, and put aside the more dreadful realities of Norman and Tudor and Georgian models with steel timbers grained to look like wood, and asbestos walls quaintly molded to look like rough-finished plaster: the present McClintock-Marshall steel houses in a grander, lusher model.) Mr. Haskell does not include in his specifications any mechanical means for producing the equivalent of sunlight and fresh air: so one infers that he rejects the notion of manufacturing them. But the most admirable technical design will not ensure these commodities unless appropriate provision is made on the site. This means a proper orientation of blocks: it means shallow lots and wide fronts: it means land subdivided, not to suit the convenience of the realty speculator, but the functions of the dwelling house: it means, in other words, economical and intelligent community planning, which will ensure a sufficient quantity of open spaces and convert them into usable parks, gardens and playgrounds. Without these provisions numerous windows and sun porches are merely fashionable frauds.

We are, then, faced with the fact that the solution for the house of the future involves many more elements than scientific design and factory production. Should a cheap manufactured house be put on the market without an effective reorientation of town planning and community building, the result would only be the same pitiful mechanical chaos with which the automobile has confronted us. The moral is not to forget the mechanical house of the future, but to remember the community in which it must be placed. Once one remembers the community problem, and attempts to effect economies at this end as well, the solution is altered, too: Mr. Henry Wright has pointed out in America, and every intelligent social town planner realizes in Europe, that the well planned row house is both cheaper and more private than the individual house that is set close to its neighbors: he knows, too, that it is important to save by economic utilities connections, a reduction of paving, and opening up community sites as units—and that the gain involved in producing a cheap structural unit can be entirely offset by our present extreme wastefulness in all these departments.

In short, no decent "house of the future" can be designed in the factory alone. To forget this is to foster specious hopes; and if the mechanized house is placed upon the market before appropriate community and regional plans are made for it, the result will be the same drab, inefficient and nasty environment that the speculative builder creates today. A high total efficiency in the mechanized house, without modern community planning, is a myth.

There are one or two other little points in the industrial production of houses that Mr. Haskell has ignored; but they would tend to darken the picture even more. The possibilities of overproduction, competitive stylization, premature obsolescence—possibilities that are now notorious in the automobile and plumbing industries—must be canvassed in any discussion of the factory-made house. We need, for its safe and efficient production, not merely community and regional plans: we also need a social control of the means of production, and a regulation of output and prices in terms of the needs that are to be served and the human ends that are to be accomplished. This takes us closer to the example of Ernst May in Frankfort than it does to Mr. Ford and his ingenious but overrated Model T. A communism of technique in the production of houses, with the usual anarchy and monopoly in our system of land holding, financing and community design, is an unworkable anachronism. No one who accepts this situation as inevitable has considered all the implications of the house of the future: for if our basic institutions and ideals are not changed, the more the house is altered, the more it will remain the same.

LEWIS MUMFORD.

"God's First Creature Was Light"

From dark the striped muscles sprang,
The lion mane, the spotted foot.
Across the dark was gently put
The lengthening and hungry fang.

Onto the open firmament
With each black star a stepping stone,
Fierce, supple, monstrous and alone,
Light, the first creature, softly went.

WINIFRED WELLES.

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Profits Destroy Prosperity

FOR MORE than a hundred years, socialists have been fond of attributing depressions to the inability of the masses to buy the products that were being made available by industrial improvements. However, it is only recently that the idea has been accepted in the respectable circles of business men, politicians, newspaper editors, popular writers and economists. The emergence of this idea from the shady realms of social taboo is a significant event in the history of human thought, but it is not this fact which I wish to consider in the present article. What I am concerned with is the fundamental question whether, in a period of prosperity, more is produced than the consumers have money to buy—or more particularly, whether this was the case in the period preceding the present depression—and if so, why it was.

Most of the references to the lack of buying power have been made without supporting argument. Attempts to prove the case have been based on the relation of the pay roll to the value of the product in manufacturing, the most important field in which such data are available. These data show, for example, an increase of 3 percent in wages paid from 1927 to 1929, but an increase of 10 percent in the dollar volume of the product. Such data, although significant, are not conclusive. They take no account, for instance, of wages and value product in trade and service. Data for a complete study of this kind are difficult, if not impossible, to obtain.

It is in the relation between the pay roll and the value of the product for sale that a deficiency in purchasing power would appear. But in order to study the relation between the amount paid as wages and the value of the product, it is not necessary to investigate either of these items directly; it is sufficient to observe the record of business profits, for which data are more complete and available than for the two other items.

Profits and Wages

Profits are the excess of income over outgo. An increase in profits can mean only that the value of the product exceeds the amount paid out as wages, interest, etc., by a larger amount than formerly. In other words, if profits increase, the persons whose incomes are derived from wages and other expense items in business cannot buy so large a share of the national product as before the increase. Consequently there would be a larger quantity of goods and services which could be sold only in case the increased profits were used to buy them. Wages are especially important in this matter, since they comprise some 70 to 80 percent of the expenses of business as a whole.

The United States Steel Corporation, for example, made profits of $88,000,000 in 1927, $114,000,000 in 1928, and $197,500,000 in 1929. Whatever was the quantity of the product turned out by United States Steel in 1927 which the wage earners employed by that corporation could not have purchased with their wages, there was clearly in 1929 a far larger volume of product that was beyond their buying power. If the owners did not wish to buy this $109,000 000 worth of additional product, or its equivalent, from other companies, then what could be done with it?

Increase in Technical Efficiency

According to the bulletin of the National City Bank the profits of 1509 corporations increased from $4,731,000,000 in 1927 to $5,806,000,000 in 1928, and to $6,509,000,000 in 1929—an increase of 39.3 percent during the latter two years. Thus the owners in these 1509 corporations held money claims to almost $2,000,000,000 more of the total products of the country in 1929 than in 1927; or in other words, they were able to buy this additional quantity of product in 1929 over the amount they could have bought in 1927. To say that the owners were able to buy the additional goods, represented by the increase in profit, is to say that the wage earners were not able to buy them, unless they bought them on credit.

These tremendous profits resulted primarily from the technical improvements which marked almost all lines of endeavor during this period, and which greatly increased the output of goods. Coal or its equivalent in gas and oil used to produce a unit of electricity was cut in half, and the annual production of electric energy was increased by 150 percent from 1919 to 1930. The tractive power of locomotive engines increased 19 percent and the length of railway trains 29 percent from 1922 to 1929. The Federal Reserve Bulletin shows the physical output of industrial production for 1929 to have been 19 percent above the average output for 1923 to 1925. As wage rates did not rise, the increase in technical efficiency resulted in a considerable reduction in the unit of cost of product. This, together with the fact that meanwhile prices fell only slightly, gave enormous profits to business firms.

But orthodox economists would argue that these large profits did not mean that there was a lack of buying power for the country as a whole. Profits, plus wages and other forms of outgo, equal the

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value of the total product, and hence there is no deficiency of purchasing power, they would say, since profits are as adequate as wages to move goods off the shelves. Profits, the orthodox argument goes, will be used in two ways—either to buy consumption goods or to produce production goods. If they are used for the one purpose they are an immediate addition to purchasing power, and if for the other, purchasing power is added through the transference of money to laborers who will promptly use it to buy consumption goods.

Current observation disproves this traditional analysis. Profit receivers are not zealous purchasers of consumption goods. The fact that they receive profits shows that they prefer to invest rather than spend all of their available money. Further, profit receivers—stockholders who get dividends—constitute a very small portion of the population. They are largely within the group of persons who have incomes of $5,000 or more per year and comprise only some 4 percent of the income receivers of the nation. Perhaps the great bulk of dividends paid out goes to the persons with incomes of $8,000 or more per year, and these represent only one percent of the persons who receive an income. Certainly no considerable portion of dividend payments goes to persons with annual incomes below $2,000, and these make up about 85 percent of the persons who have money incomes.

In terms of ownership, not much of the dividends goes to the class owning less than $500 worth of property, and this class constitutes 80 percent of the population over twenty-one years of age, according to the estimates of the Federal Trade Commission. We may be sure that the persons who have property worth $10,000 or more get most of the dividends paid out, and they constitute only some 5.3 percent of the adult population. Futhermore, profits are to a considerable degree not paid out to individuals, but are retained by corporations, where they cannot be used in the purchase of consumption goods.

Where Did the Surplus Go?

During the early years of our recent period of prosperity, profits were used in extending plant equipment. New plants were constructed and new equipment was installed, to make possible a still larger volume of production. But, as the inability to sell became more evident, additions to equipment were checked and profits were held as cash or employed in the stock market. The volume of non-bank loans to brokers totaled $6,660,000,000 on October 4, 1929. This sum of money was obviously not being used by business men to extend equipment: therefore it was not being promptly transferred from its owners to wage earners, as economists have argued. The loans to brokers got into somebody's hands, to be sure, but these were not the hands of people who were undersupplied with consumption goods.

The record of increased deposits in savings banks during the year 1930 offers further confirmation of the fact that the profits of the latter part of the era of prosperity were not utilized according to the traditional formula. In the state of New York such deposits increased by more than $400,000,000, and raised the aggregate savings accounts for the state to the highest level in history. These deposits came largely from corporations, and this, we are told in the press, has given great concern to the State Superintendent of Banks. The state law limits the deposits in a savings bank to $7,500 for any one customer, and many corporations have deposited the maximum amount in many different banks. One bank, the Seamen's Bank for Savings, has refused to take more than $1,000 from any one depositor, and that not oftener than once a quarter. Here we have purchasing power which the corporations did not and do not wish to use, and which the savings banks do not wish to receive as deposits!

Too Much Prosperity

It may be argued that the increase in profits during the period under review shows that goods were purchased—that there was not a lack of buying power. This is true enough for the early part of the prosperity period. But the sales were partly on credit, which reached its limit of expansion before the middle of 1929. Then, too, during the early years of the period of prosperity, as already indicated, profits were used to obtain additional equipment, and this transferred buying power to the wage earners. But eventually the limit of profitable equipment was reached, in view of the restricted purchasing power of the masses. Further, profits during 1928 and 1929 resulted in part from the sale of raw materials, semi-finished goods, and finished goods purchased by wholesale houses, commission men and retailers and not yet disposed of to final consumers. Unquestionably sales were checked and employment began to decrease in July, 1929. There can be no doubt as to that.

In conclusion, let me say that our trouble was caused by the fact that profits grew too fast and became too large during 1927, 1928 and 1929. For a time the increasing profits were a great spur to business activity, but eventually they destroyed the prosperity which they had helped to create. Wages did not rise enough or prices fall enough to permit the great mass of the population to buy the enlarged product with which an ever developing technique flooded the market.

Too large a portion of the buying power of the nation—too large a portion of the money claims against the total national product—passed into the hands of people who did not wish to buy consumption goods, and hence production had to be curtailed and employees had to be dismissed. The dismissal of employees reduced the buying power of laborers, prompted further curtailment of production and more unemployment, which in turn pro-

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duced still more unemployment. Only if business men had voluntarily spurned the opportunities to make profits in 1927, 1928 and the first part of 1929—only if they had cut prices and raised wages when they did not "need" to do so—could they have gone on producing goods and providing employment.

As Frank A. Vanderlip, former president of the National City Bank, has recently said with apologies lest he be considered a "parlor socialist"—"we did not divide the fruits fairly. Capital got a pretty generous share. It produced goods at considerably lower cost, did not pay much higher wages, and sold for about the same price. The result was that . . . the great mass of effective consumers, the wage earners, could not take its share of the goods produced."

The position taken in this article is in the sharpest possible conflict with many current notions as to the cause of the depression, such as "we lived too high"; "we overate and must suffer the pangs of indigestion"; "we bought too much on credit." Rather, the great bulk of the population was not able to live high enough, and it was only its purchases on credit that permitted industry to go on as long as it did. Likewise the argument here is directly opposed to Wesley Clair Mitchell's oft-repeated notion that increasing costs—inefficiency of labor and rising interest rates—reduce profits to a minimum and force discontinuance of production. Similarly the position here is the opposite of that taken by Fisher, Commons and other "stable money" advocates, who see in declining prices the cause of depressions.

In sum, the spread that was maintained between wages during 1927, 1928 and 1929 gave enormous profits, and these profits were the nemesis of prosperity.

GORDON HAYES.

Washington Notes

Stirring the Campaign Broth—Confusion Worse Confounded—Wet Planks Adrift—A Dry Shouse

THE FACT that the next presidential campaign has got under way so much earlier than usual is being interpreted in some quarters as indicative of a far deeper than ordinary interest among the voters. To me this interpretation does not seem justified. Undoubtedly if the zeal of persons now engaged in stirring the so-called political pot does not flag, popular interest will be aroused, but it will be neither spontaneous nor genuine.

In the end, of course, it may achieve the same purpose, but it is my conviction that the 1932 campaign is being prematurely forced, and by two agencies in particular. One of these agencies is the radio and the other the publicity departments of the two party committees. So far as the first is concerned, the rivalry between the two big broadcasting corporations has led them to establish weekly political reviews, supplemented by frequent discourses upon public and political questions by more or less conspicuous figures eager for the opportunity to expound. As for the publicity departments, it was the Democrats who set the pace, but now both the Republicans and the progressives have geared their machines to an unprecedentedly high speed, with the result that we have an unparalleled flood of political propaganda—continuous, expensive and expansive.

The unceasing activities of these two agencies—radio and party-propaganda directors—through the spring and summer, will stimulate an interest where normally there would be none. Signs of this are already plentiful enough, and it will be interesting to see what this extraordinary forcing produces. Possibly it may create an enlightened interest in politics among the people, and that undeniably would be a fine thing. On the other hand, there is a chance that they may become even more completely bored by the political blah and sink even deeper into the slough of indifference. I must confess that when, as happened a few days ago, four United States Senators in a single evening discussed the "issues of the campaign"—not one of whom agreed even remotely with any other as to what the issues are or would be—I must confess that some of this political stirring seems calculated to promote confusion rather than clarity in the popular mind, which even under the best conditions is apt to be slightly soggy.

However, when it comes to confusion, I do not think the public can possibly be more confused about the issues than the politicians are. Confusion is in the air. Confusion is the order of the day. There is confusion now among the party leaders, not only as to the issues, but even about the direction in which they are headed, and there will be infinitely more confusion when Congress meets in December.

Altogether, we are in for a confused campaign in 1932, with no prospect at all, so far as I can see, that it will be clarified either by the platforms or the candidates of either party. Certainly there is nothing in the way of lucid thought or statement to be expected from the present White House occupant, whose renomination is accepted as inevitable and whose ideas and efforts are beginning to be concentrated very intensely indeed upon the job of minimizing the protest sure to be made by the progressives.

It is on the problem of how best to frustrate progressive sabotage in the several presidential primaries and to soft-pedal the progressive outburst in the convention that Hoover's political corps of counselors and advisers is now concentrating. The more practical of the old-line politicians, who will have most to do with the management of his campaign, believe that strategy before the convention is a far greater problem than strategy afterwards. Once the ticket is nominated, these managerial fellows are entirely in accord as to the proper procedure. In effect their idea is that the "Don't-Swap-Horses-While-Crossing-the-Stream" slogan should be the theme song of the Republican campaign. Add to this the belief that there can be one more Dry President, and you have the Republican idea complete. It is not noble, perhaps, but those who have most closely observed the American voters perform in the past will admit it is likely to be effective.

This is, of course, the normal attitude of the majority party. It is naturally on the defensive, and platitudinous generalities are always the best defense. "Things are not

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so bad as they seem and everything will turn out all right if you leave us alone"—that is the standardized position for the party in power under such conditions as now prevail. It is from the opposition that concrete, constructive and specific proposals are normally to be expected. The minority party should find no nourishment in generalities: it should be definite as to issues.

For a while I really believed that at least on prohibition, both clarity and courage could be expected from the Democrats this time. It was perfectly clear that though the party platform would denounce the Republican position on economic issues, on the tariff and on foreign affairs, these denunciations would have a hollow sound. As a party the Democrats are much too widely divided, too vague and much too concerned in keeping the confidence of the "business interests" to take any unequivocal stand which is radically different from that of the Republicans. Prohibition, however, was another matter, and up to a week or so ago I thought that if the so-called Raskob home-rule plan were not adopted, there would be some other declaration of sufficient definiteness to stamp the party Wet. Now, I do not think so, even though the Wets will have the convention votes. Democratic leaders from South and West—and some from New York, too—who have been here recently, seem full of confidence that the Wet element will not insist upon a Wet plank.

This is a different tune from the one they sang some time ago. Then it was sturdily held that the party must adopt a courageous stand on prohibition, that the platform must be in accord with the candidate and that a pussyfooting course would be degrading and disastrous. Now they argue just the other way. They contend that a Wet declaration in the platform is unnecessary, that it is all very well to talk about courage, but votes can be gained by not making the platform Wet and are sure to be lost by inserting the Wet plank. So, why do the politically inexpedient thing?

When you find men who defended one course a few weeks ago earnestly defending the opposite course now, you can be sure something has happened. This something, in my opinion, is a weakening on the part of the Raskob National Committee outfit, which had made the adoption of a Wet plank its avowed object. Two reasons are now given for the belief that the Wet party leaders will not exert their power so far as the platform is concerned. The first is a realization that it cannot be done except over a protest so violent and a fight so bitter that party prospects would be damaged. The other is that neither one of the two men most likely to be nominated for President—Franklin D. Roosevelt and Owen D. Young—is particularly interested in forcing a Wet declaration into the platform. Each would prefer to make his own platform on this issue in the way Al Smith made it in 1928—either by a telegram to the convention prior to his nomination or in his speech of acceptance later—or both.

In other words, there seems to be a definite swing away from the belief that a courageous and outspoken plank on this subject would be good Democratic politics, toward a belief that it would not be. However, the thing that impresses me most is the character of recent speeches by Mr. Shouse, Raskob's assistant chairman, in the South. In these speeches he has stressed the fact that "economic issues" would be paramount and he has distinctly conveyed the impression, though without actually saying so, that prohibition would be secondary and subordinate. This suits the Dry South and West, and Shouse's utterances in those sections were warmly received.

To my mind his speeches are significant of a diluted determination upon the part of the Committee management to put over a Wet program—or any sort of a program. It reeks of a diminished belligerency and seems to increase the probability that the Democratic party will come out of its 1932 convention as it did in 1928, with a totally innocuous platform, which, except for the indictment of the Hoover administration, will not in any vital detail be different from that of the Republicans. It means that the Democrats will go into the campaign relying for success upon the personality of their candidate, the lack of prosperity and the resentment of the voters, rather than upon any constructive party proposals. That is not very noble either, but then what reason is there to expect anything else?

Washington. T. R. B.

Indicative Portraits

Fascist Judge

C—— IS TALL and quiet-looking, with gray eyes and a still mouth. Your first impression is that he is lovable and right, your second that he ought to be a great man, or at least to be thought so. In college he was somewhat solemnly precocious, a nine days' wonder of derivative seriousness and prophetic style. After he left college he wrote no more, however, and is now a lawyer, born with an income, and interested in public questions. He carries on his studies in moral and political essays, serves on committees and speaks at honorary, casual luncheons and dinners. You know all this, and instead of thinking much about it, you carry away an impression that he has a mild and gentle warmth combined with something strangely asexual.

C—— likes to travel in Italy, for some strong and unimpassioned reason of his own. The galleries he has visited well and reflected upon; and the famous architectural instances he has studied. He is well read in the political history of Italy. While he is there he stays sometimes with American friends who live in a villa outside Lucca, and they discuss the Italians thoroughly.

Concerning Italian politics and the Fascist regime in Italy, C—— is most convinced. He knows the story of the free cities in the twelfth century, and he is familiar with the history of Fascism in its various stages. He disapproves of the entire program, thinks Fascism excessive, tyrannical and antiquated. The black shirts of the Fascists, worn now only on parade or anniversary occasions, he regards as absurd; the hymns and the salute in the antique Roman manner are to him childish; and the general tone of orations and government messages he takes as merely operatic. These expressions of the Italian temperament, the search after symbols that will express the idea, the glow, the presence of the living past, the autocratic tendency, the inability to be comfortable in plain prose, the florid vitality or the some-

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what spectacular austerity and so on, he reflects upon with a philosophic method that is strangely convincing, since he knows, of course, nothing about what he is judging; and he contrives an elaborate Italian analysis, based almost wholly on what he brought with him in his own head. If ever there was a man incapable of understanding the Italians, it is C——, from their mere physical beginning in passion and vitality to that final subtle fatalism and patience of theirs, which he mistakes for lazy indifference. If the Italians, on their part, would study C——, they would at least learn something of what they are not. Of all my friends at home, nevertheless, he has the most conscientious, condemnatory and ructionary atitude toward Fascism.

Fascism may be good or bad, or between the two, but C——'s opinion concerning Fascism as it is related to the Italians—Italian Fascism in sum—is about as pertinent and valuable as his opinion on astronomy.

Style and High Privilege

Hearing the Count's latest news, his arrival in Paris, which I have seen in the English-speaking papers, has led my mind back to our voyage on the boat together, over from New York; and has caused me to reflect on my friend's ways and the extent to which he represents a quality that is European—a certain European type at least—and that seems to be doomed, and ought to be.

During the entire voyage a servant rarely passed the Count without being called to. A glass of water, coffee, a cognac must be brought. On two occasions he asked for a toothpick. In the dining-salon the inexhaustible menu was not enough. At lunch he consulted with his steward and ordered special dishes for dinner that night; at dinner the elegance and specialties of lunch next day were arranged, with endless consultation and choice. These dishes and these accompanying wines in their due season appeared, and were consumed with that swift and seemingly heedless European manner of eating that our travelers observe. He never thanked the waiter for his pains, but he did from time to time make some witticism about food or people that sent into convulsions the servant, who had attended princes before but not always witty princes like the Signor Conte.

The Count's stateroom was rated at three times the fare he had paid, which was greatly reduced because his visit to America had been, somehow, more or less official, or so it seemed. But he had complained, had been moved to one of the cabin-de-luxe affairs, with its drawing-room in damask. At night, when the orchestra stopped and the passengers began to scatter, the Count would call for sandwiches and tea. The tea was never hot enough, and the sandwiches were often sent back; he would have them open up the kitchen and get butter out. "We who travel at reduced rates," he would say to me, "always complain of the service." This was one of those merry jests with its own element of truth, never clearer to anyone than to himself. It was two o'clock before he retired for the night.

As a poor little American, unaccustomed to perfected and special service, troubled too by the exhaustion of the stewards, and unused to finding nothing ever quite right, I might have expected the Count, perhaps, to deal out the most munificent rewards. But the night before Genoa he inquired of me as to how much I meant to give the stewards of my stateroom and table, and when I mentioned some likely sum, poor at that for all their willingness and simple good-heartedness, he commended me to nothing like so much. I was to give no more than five dollars, which was what he meant to give, it seemed. He put a kind of compulsion into the matter.

At Genoa the doorman, the bureau, the stewards of the most select hotel, all rushed forward to greet the Signor Conte. We had gone there merely for refreshments, I for a vermouth, he for a coffee, which he, after some moment's conversation, found cold, and called the waiter to replace with another. That night the Count himself was going on to Cannes and Paris. He has lived in Italy, at intervals, for many years, but lately, under the present regime, finds it less satisfactory. There is no organization of vice in Italy.

While we lingered over these consummations of ours, a young couple from the boat appeared and joined us for the moment. They were making a honeymoon tour of three months and Cannes was included. What could he advise, they wanted to know, about things in general, and an automobile in particular that would take them to Cannes? He arranged first that they spend the night in Genoa and went himself to select their room. Meanwhile he summoned the manager and a conference ensued, with a price for the automobile that caused the bridegroom to turn inquiringly to his adviser. But the Count assured him that everything was most reasonable, one could do no better. He gave them his card, which they were to present to the manager of the leading hotel at Cannes, with the Count's compliments and recommendation to most special attention. This settled, he arranged that I should escort them to see the sights of Genoa that afternoon, and that he, meanwhile, should take a siesta in their room.

Lately in Florence, one day at noon, the little couple—who for that matter brought along a letter of credit for fifteen thousand dollars, and so are no subject for pathos—turned up at Doney's for drinks. It seems that the automobile, in addition to the good price proposed, charged them for the return trip to Genoa, though they eventually discovered that it was owned by the hotel and belonged at Cannes, to which it was returning when the Genoa arrangement was made. Later the manager tried to add the sum for the automobile, paid once already, to the hotel bill.

Foreign Charity

Doney's three rooms are separated from the street by their glass windows only; and everyone knows who goes to Florence that in the Tornabuoni outside we may see the town go by. My friends and I have the table nearest the glass, and just behind us is a party of four, three American ladies and an Englishman. The noon gun has sounded and Doney's is crowded for apéritifs, coffee and cocktails. Many of the people here are Americans. My neighbor and compatriot just behind is smallish, around fifty, with a pretty face in a sort of sapped way, the eyes too little, the chin firm above a dwindling neck. She has turned evidently toward the window and ends by looking me in the eye and then back to the street. I follow her gaze and see standing there the figure of an old woman.

The old woman is begging, the second beggar that I

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have seen in Florence so far. She is wrinkled and bent sideways, and is brown and red with the sun. Her whole appearance is after the baroque figurines that you see from the seventeenth century, twisted almost elegantly as she is from the normal posture. I am not sure; she may be tortured like that with age and rheumatism, she may be doing it rather well, for travel has its skepticisms. What engages my attention is the confiding look in my neighbor's eyes. Whoever she may be, I see that she is going to speak to me. "Isn't it terrible!" she says. "Well," I say "it's very easy to go out and give her fifty lire, if you like." This is an impertinent speech, I know that, but it is one of those times politeness seems dispensable. However, the remark is wasted, she does not take in its sarcasm. "Isn't it terrible!" she says again, and adds, "There are so many of them in Italy." This is not true at all, but I say no more, and can hear her voice again, speaking now to the Englishman—they are watching the waiter making someone's change, with a deluge of small coins. "In America we call that chicken feed," she says to the Englishman, and turns to her sandwiches, one of Doney's specialties, pastry and butter tinged with anchovy, which not many Italians can afford, but which are justly famous.

STARK YOUNG.

Sociology, Fate, Form and Films

"A SHANGHAI DOCUMENT," Sovkino film projected for a couple of days recently at the Cameo Theatre, New York, presents a renewed problem for the many critics who find propaganda in every cinematic earwiggle from Moscow. To my eye, this production is composed solely of unstaged scenes shot in that hot old town where Western concessionaire confronts Eastern proletaire across piled sandbags and festoons of barbed wire. There are cocktails at clubs in one quarter—and dippered water in the streets in the other; the whirl of a phonograph dance record for bathing-suited couples—and the weary turn of the wheel of a coolie-hauled wagon; languid ease on yachts and verandas—and killing labor on the docks; children partying on lovely lawns—and children slaving in busy mills; smart, nonchalant soldiers keeping watch and ward over Western gayety—and native agitators kneeling in rows, falling prone at the slam of Enfields held, for economy's sake, a foot behind each victim's ear. . . . Well, the critics, I shouldn't wonder, have discovered propaganda in the *montage;* and William Lyon Phelps, if he saw the film, probably has reported (as he did of "Roar China") that it is worth the attention of no intelligent person—without reflecting, of course, that this argues a wider acquaintance with the intelligentsia than is likely to come even to a mandarin.

I confess to being thoroughly fed up with the accusations of propaganda everlastingly brought against the Soviet cinema. There was a time when the critics' emphasis upon this point might have been condoned. One felt that they should be given time to accustom themselves to the shift in character types, dramatic pivotal points and motivation demanded by the Soviet milieu. But Soviet films, excellent in structure and powerful in dynamic design, have come and gone, and the critics have continued unable to characterize them otherwise than as primarily propagandist instruments.

How largely is the impression of propaganda in Soviet cinema productions due to the new and unfamiliar types, tensions and reactions logically indicated by a new and different social pattern? To me it seems obvious that the basic social change and its implications might account predominantly for the propagandist complexion of Soviet films. I do not recall that any orthodox American critic has had the wit to consider this probability. Yet, reversing the situation, what proportion of American films, exhibited before Soviet audiences, would escape the suspicion of being class propaganda? I incline to think that it would be an extremely small one. I think of a stock device in the American photoplay—a tragic difficulty is resolved by the magnanimity of a political boss, a public official or a big business man. The Soviet citizen would see in this not only a sneaking attempt to soft-soap the populace into a continued tolerance of the masters of our economy; he would also discern a well defined tendency to welch at the challenge presented by a system which places the fate of many in the hands of few. It is obvious that the challenge is there—artistically no less than sociologically—and it is also obvious that, fearing to face it, the promoters of our films cause the dénouement to revolve around the purely personal and sentimental reaction of an individual, whose significance as a beneficiary of the system is in the process left rose-colored and dim. Such a denial—and it occurs under many appearances—of the tragic necessity is not merely social cowardice; it is execrable art.

Or take the industriously cultivated theme of the "rebellion" of the younger generation. The Soviet critic would note immediately the inadequate basis for the youngsters' going wild, the arduous and extra-thematic accentuation of the risqué elements, and the forced, extraneous quality of the moral dénouement. And, quite justifiably, he would say that all three phases of the thing were designed to maintain the fiction that all is right in the bourgeois world, including the ostensibly frowned-upon opportunities for violating its avowed preference in conduct. One must recognize that the cavorting of the younger generation cannot plausibly derive from whim or from the spontaneous development of a germ of infantile irresponsibility; nor can it plausibly proceed from the example of the older generation, as such. The emphasis on step-in perspectives and vertically arranged tête-a-têtes is obviously an assurance that one may break step most deliciously and yet be saved. And when the youngsters retreat from whoopee directly to Pa, Ma and the Girls' Friendly, it is plain that a circle of many possibilities is being ignored in favor of a tenuous and faint straight line of conduct, the terminus of which exerts a comparatively feeble atraction.

And so on—to the stock gangster film, which dares not imply that our social set-up offers no type or life ideal more satisfying than that of the racketeer, but only a safer one; and which sweats to maintain the fiction that our present set-up is adequate, the gangster an extra-social product and crime a uniformly losing proposition.

"Ivan the Terrible," a Soviet film which to me seemed a mere historical record, has been denounced as propaganda

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by more than one critic who should know better. "A Fragment of Empire" would come under this charge to a far greater extent. Yet the latter film is analogous almost throughout to the story of "Rip van Winkle," and the analogy could be completed without increasing the propagandist content of either tale. Had Rip, returning after the Revolution (D. A. R. preferred), found his wife remarried to a lingering Loyalist, and had he then decided to live his own life apart, accepting the new order of things, I doubt very much that Irving's story now would be regarded as Yankee propaganda by the critics. But when the story is laid in the Soviet Union and is carried out in precisely that fashion, its propagandist purpose at once becomes its main feature—as far as our native critics are concerned.

By Communist critics the introduction of the sociological situation into the cinema has been justified largely on social grounds. I should stress the point that it is justifiable on esthetic ones. A character emerging from the sociological matrix of his time and place gains immensely in plausibility thereby, and his actions under dramatic tension gain power by the logic of their sociological reference. I think of the last scene in "Cities and Years," where a Revolutionary officer executes his best friend. Without a sociological reference, the scene would have shocked, would even have horrified; the executioner would have appeared a monster. But by an unerring building-up of the sociological situation, the victim presents himself as a fool and the executioner as fate. The former has committed the folly of bringing a sweet trifle of middle-class sentiment with him into the Red Army's front line, to the satisfaction of an enemy officer and the peril of the Comrades; while the latter is firmly conscious of the necessity for keeping things in their proper place. Knowing the sociological circumstances through which the protagonists have come to their impasse, we cannot but accept the conclusion as tragic, inevitable and artistically true.

On the other hand, the American practice of presenting the film character as an individual with but a feeble and erratic sociological significance, necessitates an inordinate emphasis upon spectacle, action, screen tricks, physical presence, costumes, props and what is laughingly known as the personality of the stars. Yet nearly always the effects of this frantic overemphasis shrink into insignificance beside the glaring artistic meanness of the play. It is the American fear of hinting a social criticism by giving due importance to the sociological factor which makes necessary the extra-thematic insistence on the actor as an individual, aside from his role. The exhausting procession of inflated personalities across the American screen—the swooning superlatives which bathe the Great Lovers and the It Girls—these are the inevitable concomitants of a cinema which welches at a challenge not less artistic than sociological. Fate gives power, form, portent; and in the sociological matrix one finds the very essential source of fate. But in the American film a perceptible gap is maintained between the matrix and the character type, and the matrix itself is rarely more than a painted drop. So the characters remain two-dimensional; the motivation runs down and now and again must be forcibly rewound; compulsion must come from sources not organically evident in the play; the action must put itself across as mere spectacle, helped now and then by a drop of decidedly standardized sentiment or emotion from a shallow stock pool; a skein of dramatic sequences may have to be carded on a wall motto purchasable at any five-and-ten; the sum total is violence and failure.

Here is precisely the point, as I see it, in Theodore Dreiser's complaint against the film version of "An American Tragedy." The makers of the film have played down the phases of the hero's life wherein are defined and developed the sociological circumstances which form his fate. And they have stressed in traditional American cinema style the spectacular elements of his later career. Thus the mainspring of compulsion is enfeebled and the tragic sequence of actions leading to the execution is left to be carried forward by something hardly more constant or cumulatively powerful than impulse or whim. What is tragedy in the book, from all reports, is made mere melodrama in the film. In his resentment at this artistic betrayal Mr. Dreiser would seem actually to be fighting against a convention established at bottom on the demands of our so-called social system itself. Perhaps, before the fight is over, the deep sociological significance of the mutilation will be made clear. MURRAY GODWIN.

A COMMUNICATION

John Dewey and His Critics

SIR: It is easy to damn absolutes. It is hard, however, to keep them out of one's criticism. Recent discussion of John Dewey's philosophy is a case in point. Not even Dewey's style, that scapegoat of impatient readers, can explain why avowedly liberal American critics in evaluating his thought relapse into positions they have pretended earlier to abandon. Whether one pins on Dewey Mr. Mumford's tag of "pragmatic acquiescence," or with Waldo Frank cries shrilly against "prostrate pragmatism," or in cold malice refers to him, *à la* Stolberg, as the unconscious ideological representative of big-business culture—the same confusion is involved. All of his literary critics demand from Dewey what on any theory but an absolutist one they cannot have: viz., a system of values independent of the context and movement of the social scene. Because Dewey refuses to condemn our highly industrialized technique on the ground that it may some day find an ideal fulfilment in a socialized culture, he is charged with accepting the *status quo* and bowing to the current cults of mechanism, quantity and conformity.

What is involved here is not a misunderstanding of Dewey's poliitcs, but a misunderstanding of his central ethical doctrine—the continuity of ends and means. The doctrine may be rejected but it is first to be understood.

Common-sense moralists as well as many sophisticated theories of criticism introduce a sharp divorce between the end of action and the means used to attain it; between the goal of a movement and the methods of getting there; between the principles of valid thought and the specific procedures which illustrate the principle. It is this assumption which is behind the oft-repeated charge that Dewey is guilty of a deep confusion between ends and means. He tries to tell us what to do without telling us why we

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should do it. He exhorts us to move without giving us a goal to guide and check our movements. He urges us ever up and onward without telling us what is up or down. Consequently Dewey has no genuine educational goals, he has only a methodology; no theory of the good but only a technique of muddling along; no logic but only a psychology. So the critics!

Let us look a little closer at their position.

Whoever makes a sharp separation between ends and means must face the following difficulty: "How are ends, ideals and principles themselves to be tested?" Once we grant that the ends are valid, they become as easy to apply as a ruler or a yardstick. And as irrelevant to the moral life! Any length can serve as the measure of distance, but not every end can serve as the measure of a good life. Clearly, if ends are above criticism, all ends are on the same level; the "better" end can only mean the stronger "impulse." Ethics then becomes a part of descriptive psychology, a catalogue of human desires and a study of the conditions under which they arise. If there is any such thing, then, as moral conduct, ends cannot be taken as self-certifying, but must be subject to criticism.

There are two generic ways in which ends may be criticized. We may say either that they are justified by a higher "intuition" or that they are empirically verified in action. It is easy to show that in view of conflicting intuitions of what is higher, the first position leads to arbitrary subjectivism in theory, a theory which often finds a cynical correction in a "might makes right" morality in practice. But what about the second position, Dewey's own? Does it fare any better? How are ends to be tested in action except by applying other ends, themselves taken as final? Dewey's answer is that we never really know what our ends are before we have reflected upon the probable consequences of carrying them out in practice. He holds that the only way to criticize our ends is to ask what results from the use of the means designed to realize those ends. For Dewey, wherever action is intelligent and responsible, the means are a part of the ends. We do not know what we have chosen unless we see what is involved in bringing that choice about; we cannot proclaim allegiance to exalted ideals as if that freed us from the moral imperative of judging them by their consequences.

But still, one asks, aren't there certain standards which we must use in order to determine whether the consequences of acting on our ends, of finding the specific means, are satisfactory? Certainly there are—a whole host of them, like friendship, wisdom, beauty, courage, health, security, adventure. But note. Although they are immediate goods none of them is finally good. None is supreme, none above the necessity of pointing to consequent goods in case its own immediate quality is threatened. For it is only too clear that the ethical and material goods of this world are not necessarily in harmony with each other. One good conflicts with another: knowledge with happiness; serenity with intensity. In no two situation can we resolve the conflict in exactly the same way. Hence, although we use these goods as principles to guide us in our ways, they never can determine the unique good of the particular situation. True, they are involved in every specific case. But there is something more always present which controls the manner and extent of their operation.

Ethical standards function like scientific hypotheses. They guide conduct but are controlled by what they lead us to. A morality which flings its "ought" to the world irrespective of what the world at any moment "is," which refuses to have its ends rough-hewn by the critical test of experimental living, converts personal caprice or dead tradition into immutable first principles. For Dewey moral ends are ends chosen after reflection, chosen with a full consciousness of what we want, of how to get it and of what we must give up for it. Intelligence and sincerity are central to the good life. To know is not enough. To know by doing is all there is to genuinely reflective morality.

Observe now how the literary critics of Dewey understand him. Where Dewey writes that there are no standards or goods above criticism, they read him as if he denied the existence or necessity of *any* standards. Where he insists that ideals must have a natural basis in the social order, they hear him say in substance: "Whatever is, is right." Where Dewey says "Don't be too sure about your goal unless it can guide you a little way ahead so that you can take another reading," they complain, "Dewey tells us how to get ten steps ahead, but he does not tell us where and what the goal is." Where Dewey affirms that science and technology are here to stay, that they can and should be the basis of a new social order, he is accused of surrendering to the drift of mechanical forces. And, finally, when Dewey refuses to give the blueprints of the cultural pattern he expects the new social order to evolve, his critics exclaim that he does not know what he wants.

It is the failure to come to grips with the experimental theory of knowledge and morals which makes these criticisms of Dewey's social philosophy seem so pathetically utopian.

Dewey's idea is a socialized America. In terms of his own position, the only quarrel one can have with him is his failure to appreciate the instrumental value of *class struggle* rather than class collaboration in effecting the transition from Corporate America to Collective America.

Brooklyn, New York. SIDNEY HOOK.

CORRESPONDENCE

Tribal Arts of the Amerindian

SIR: There has been recently launched a project in which I am sure many of your readers will be interested. This is the Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts, Inc. We are organizing the first comprehensive and representative exhibition of the paintings, sculpture, pottery, textiles, jewelry, etc., of the tribes of American Indians now living in this country. It will have its first showing in the Grand Central Art Galleries of New York next December, and will thereafter be exhibited in other cities of the United States. It will give many Americans their first opportunity of seeing beautiful, authentic Indian things, shown as art rather than ethnology.

The purpose of the Exposition of Indian Tribal Arts is to obtain for the artists and craftsmen among our Indian tribes wider appreciation for their work, to gain for it the appraisal and recognition which it so richly deserves, and to create for it an enlarged market. On the advisory committee are some of our most prominent scientists, artists and writers. The Exposition is incorporated as a non-profit-making organization, and will welcome the coöperation of those of your readers who are interested in the welfare of the Indians and the preservation of their arts. The national office is at 578 Madison Avenue, New York City.

New York City. JOHN SLOAN, President.

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Cave Drawings in the Empire State

SIR: We did not need any "attention caller" to see the article "Progress and Poverty" in the issue of May 20 of The New Republic.

We naturally have no bone to pick with any conclusions Edmund Wilson or any other writers wish to reach. The thing that got under the skin of ourselves and the Empire State executives, was the reference to the pornographic art work on the walls of the fifty-fifth floor. Mr. Wilson gives the impression that this space is open to the public and that every visitor to the building sees it. This naturally is a wrong impression. This unrented floor is closed to the public and no one is admitted to it, save building employees. It is natural when some 4,000 workmen are employed in the construction of a building such as this, that some small mind should exhibit its pornographic urge on the walls. Lest Mr. Wilson think this unusual, however, we wish to refer him to any subway lavatory.

We do not think it just to criticize Empire State for such an incident. MRS. HENRY MOSKOWITZ,

Director of Publicity, the Empire State Building.

New York City.

[I was certainly told at the opening of the Empire State Building that the fifty-fifth floor was the show floor and taken there in the elevator. For the rest, I didn't mean to criticize the building for the existence of the drawings: I merely meant to contrast its essentially anti-social character with their all-too-human humanity. —E. W.]

The Scottsboro Case and the Communists

SIR: Since general attention is focused, especially among the 13,000,000 American Negroes, on the Scottsboro case, may we be permitted a reply to the publicity director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, whose letter in your issue of May 27 may be a good publicity stunt but is decidedly not a statement of fact.

1. We agree that the matter of priority is not now of great importance except as an indication of the laxity of the N. A. A. C. P. The International Labor Defense and the League of Struggle for Negro Rights were the first on the scene in Scottsboro in the form of investigations, legal defense and publicity for the nine Negro boys. Through the offices of the I. L. D. the first publicity material on the Scottsboro case was released to the A. P., the U. P., hundreds of newspapers and the liberal weeklies. While the state of Alabama was preparing for its bloody carnival, the N. A. A. C. P. was still in doubt about the whole case.

2. The families of these boys and the boys themselves have definitely asked and agreed that George W. Chamlee should act as chief counsel. The boys are all minors and three of them are only fourteen years old, and still the N. A. A. C. P. goes to prison in company of state officials and a local minister in attempt to confuse these young boys with the cry of "Reds, Reds." Why does the N. A. A. C. P. turn to children instead of the responsible guardians of these boys? The parents have just issued a statement, saying:

> We hope that outside organizations will not go to the jails and prisons and try to persuade our children to disregard our advice on this matter. We appreciate all friendly coöperation, but we condemn in unmeasured terms efforts of inter-meddlers who have heretofore been interfering and sending out false reports about the case. We appeal to all organizations to coöperate with the I. L. D. and with the attorneys we have selected jointly with the I. L. D.

The boys have concurred in the above statement after their parents visited them in prison.

3. The N. A. A. C. P. denies any publicity against the I. L. D. We have a complete file of their releases. Every other sentence is not a defense of these boys against this legal lynching, but a Hamilton Fish attack on Communism. We are willing to submit our publicity material as a test of our sincerity. We did not even reply to the N. A. A. C. P. attacks until it became a matter of supreme importance, and the Negro press demanded material. We could quote hundreds of editorials and news items in the Negro press. The Washington, D. C., World says editorially: "We are not Communists . . . we have always praised the work of the N. A. A. C. P., but we feel that here there are indications of weakness, if not actual hypocrisy." The Chicago Defender, the most influential and largest Negro newspaper in the United States of America, speaks of the I. L. D. as "an organization distinguished for its love of justice, although unpopular among the wealth and power of the land, [which] has come to help these young men to clear themselves. It is a source of boundless gratification." While the only releases sent out by the I. L. D. have been publicity for the case and two or three replies to the attacks made by the N. A. A. C. P on the I. L. D., the Negro press has sensed the difference between the two organizations and with very few exceptions has bravely and distinctly held with the I. L. D., for a united front.

4. One of the two attorneys retained by the N. A. A. C. P. is a . . . police court lawyer . . . who had originally betrayed these boys.

The International Labor Defense makes only one condition of collaboration in this case: that is, the demand for the freeing of these boys. In this demand the N. A. A. C. P. has consistently refused to join. Our investigators have been in the South from the beginning of this case. We have the transcripts and know that these boys are being *judicially lynched.* The courts have recognized our attorneys as the legal defense of these boys. Our Southern counsel, George W. Chamlee, is a well known criminal lawyer and is backed by a staff of eight Northern attorneys. We are confident of winning this case if a united front backed by excellent legal counsel and a mass protest become the objective of every individual and organization interested in justice for these nine Negro boys. JOSEPH PASS,

Publicity Director, International Labor Defense.

New York City.

Brickbats and Roses

SIR: Mr. Allen Tate writes reviews as if he had a book on his chest. His comments on "Fatal Interview" were so full of erudition, his words so loaded with sense that, paradoxically, the result was nonsense. Take, for instance, the statements:

> The generation of decadence—Moody, Woodberry and Louise Imogene Guiney—had more than Miss Millay has; but she has all that they had which was not dead. By making their language personal she has brought it back to life. . . . This is her distinction. It is also her limitation. As a limitation, it is not peculiar to her, her age or any age, but common to all; it is the quality that defines Collins and Gray, and, in the next century, poets like the Rossettis and Tennyson.

Can anyone but a specialist in literature apprehend their significance? What do the words "personal" and "life" mean? I forbear quoting the remainder of the paragraph. . . .

Mr. Tate continues by remarking that Miss Millay "was not prepared to give her generation a philosophy in comprehensive terms; her poetry does not define the break with the nineteenth century, "as T. S. Eliot's does," adds Mr. Tate. Why should Miss Millay be criticized for what she has not attempted, when one should appreciate her poetry in the same manner that one would estimate a song in Ault's "Anthology of Elizabethan Lyrics?" . . .

Finally the sonnet of Miss Millay's that Tate quotes as her finest causes me to believe that Mr. Tate and I speak in different languages.

New York City. JOSEPH P. LASH.

SIR: Allow me to write to you of Mr. Allen Tate's review in your issue of May 6. It is one of those rare literary critiques, one which is penetrating, just and untouched by personal animus or favoritism. Thanks to its content and distinguished expression, his review is an example of our best American criticism—how seldom that is!—and Miss Millay's poetic achievement has certainly found a worthy critical counterpart in Mr. Tate's article. EDWARD DORO.

University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pa.

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The Voice of the No Man

The Nemesis of American Business, by Stuart Chase. New York: The Macmillan Company. 191 pages. $2.

WITH THAT bluff honesty and lucidity which we have come to associate with his name, Stuart Chase speaks his mind upon the "yes man." We have been familiar with the yes man for many years, as the ignominious, novel and cursed by-product of our mass civilization. He has been reviled, he has been cruelly satirized; until he has learned to give a hollow laugh in unison with his tormentors. Having laughed, he resumes the daily repetition of the one syllable with which he buys his peculiar salvation. The yes man is everywhere in our midst; he multiplies ever; and none has given us an effective antidote—none, at any rate, so clearly as Stuart Chase, who, in a chapter on "The Luxury of Integrity," calls upon the *no men* to rise against him.

"With the no men will lie character, courage, individuality, saltiness," he writes. "With the yes men will lie radios, automobiles, bathtubs, and a complete paralysis of the will to act in accordance with their fundamental inclinations."

There is freshness, there is clarity, even enthusiasm in these phrases. Tired of the farragoes of visiting foreigners, we have long wished that some sharp native mind might be equal to describing the actualities of our new times in a spirit of disinterestedness. And since Stuart Chase has come to fill this want, we tend to call down blessings upon him. It is even more significant that this observer of the American scene is no littérateur, but one who has emerged from strenuous business struggles and the buffetings of the market place with a close grip upon our immediate human problems, one who also has a knack of expressing himself in the language of the market place, the language of The Saturday Evening Post, the language of "plain everyday Americans," in short. For these virtues and for his alert intelligence we tend to pardon his knockabout style and his considerable indifference to literary elegance—deficiencies, of course, which assure him of a large public and many converts to his constructive gospel. (Would that the 50,000,000 literates who know how to spell out movie subtitles every week might be led to read his book! Would that Mr. Hoover, Mr. Morrow, Mr. Ford and Mr. Young might pause amid grave concerns to read it fruitfully!)

The essays of Stuart Chase, collected in book form, hang well together and, in the manner of a series of notations or letters on civilization in the United States of America, compose a remarkable chronicle of the great contemporary crisis. One of the highest compliments that may be paid them is that they carry on an old American tradition of individualistic dissent, essentially Protestant in its nature, and once represented here by men such as Emerson and Thoreau—all our yes men notwithstanding. *(All yes men please rise and say No!)* The "Nemesis," to be sure, is Emerson and Thoreau without the philosophic resonance and the keen rhetoric. But an essay such as "The Luxury of Integrity," for all its air of hasty conception, we may come to recognize as one of the finest moral tracts of our time. Its convincing picture of the kind of human fiber we are producing in quantity—the man in the street, the man in the subway or the office—steadily diminishing in personal dignity, liberty, spiritual courage and honesty, is painted by Chase with full moral seriousness, and even anger. This is its value. For we have had satire enough, what with Kaufman-Connelly, and Sinclair Lewis, and Mencken, and so many others. There has been some merry destroying, some tentative clearing of ground. But laughter itself is not enough; in the end it becomes a pointless game in which the yes man, too, may join and play his part.

Nowadays, few men laugh pleasantly. A fresh mind capable of enthusiasm as well as indignation is something we pray for here. But let us pray also that he brings us a solid prescription for our fevers and not mere sedative powders.

The crisis that Stuart Chase outlines in the various chapters of the "Nemesis" is that retribution which has come upon us after eight years of unprecedented post-war prosperity. We had all thought that in limitless producing and consuming, in the maintenance of a perpetually rising standard of living, lay our miraculous success. The process of mechanization must go on; that of manufacturing in endless series and of selling almost by compulsion must go on. There were less presentable figures in the background of the glowing picture: slums, rackets, traffic congestion, dislocations of regions, depression of agriculture, the nuisance of high-pressure selling methods, the stupendous noises of construction, and the blatant ones of the vulgar new products we created, such as the loud speaker and the automotive freight car. But these liabilities were not truly ominous, men thought; and on the whole—and rather involuntarily, it must be admitted now—immense collective advantages seemed to have been reached. . . . But today we are suddenly at "the end of an epoch."

Why the end? Because the last period of uncontrolled capitalism, viewed in one of its strongest flights (or "debauches," if you will), has rooted in the minds of all classes of men the lasting lesson of a tremendous, maddening instability, something which after all is the *sine qua non* of the profit-making order. We have augmented our definition: capitalistic prosperity is thinkable only as concomitant with instability.

Here, irresponsible capitalism may "muddle through" once more, to a comfortable, momently held area of moderate success, thanks to the enormous resources of people and land. But the times are against it; indeed, the world outside, rapidly being nationalized or socialized, is virtually leagued against it, with Russia's example most portentous of all. From the point of view of self-defense alone, it seems doubtful that the undirected economy of the United States can long be endured with safety.

As for our domestic dangers, upon which Stuart Chase has the sanest notions, we seem to be going with "an eighty-horse-power engine in a flimsy rowboat." Sooner or later the vast majority of American citizens must come to see that the cards are stacked against them, under the present regime. The myth of canal-boy-to-President was hard to relinquish; no one refers to it any more, in any sense; not even in our vaudeville circuits. No classes are spared from instability. Your large corporation suffers from federal restrictions, from world-wide maladies; above all, from "excess plant capacity" and other forms of terror. Your man in the street (earning less than $1,500 a year according to our favorite statistician, Mr. Chase) has grown stupefied or barbarous in "Middletown." If he is a yes man, he trembles eternally for his job; if he is a salesman, he perforce loses all semblance of human dignity, through violating human hospitality; if he is a laborer, technology discharges him, or the Taylor system makes him "obsolescent" (a sound human being *obsolescent*—when was this ever seen before?); or if he is a shopkeeper, a clerk in Megalopolis, he breathes into his lungs poisonous gases all day long, which no trees can endure; he dwells in the

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shadow of mile-high walls and sweats in cavernous subways.

Here are so many ciphers "in the red" to nourish our disillusionment; all these unattractive figures of our economic background have now become the whole foreground and are proverbial. Stuart Chase, formerly an accountant, familiar with the bookkeeping of Prosperity, makes his tale unusually vivid. He is fertile, also, in sallies against all the new forms of torment or barbarousness, which, like the radio and the cinema, were once destined to lead us to the millennium, but now stand naked in all their nuisance character. On the other hand, he is equally unstinted in his praise of those constructive activities which, under a finer philosophy, might make for our salvation. Technological brilliance, wherever it may be found, attracts his roving eye; certain model factories seem hallowed places to him; and his instinct to lyricize over them, as a late-feudal gentleman might marvel over a Botticelli, strikes us as being sound—since, in an economic age, these beehives of daring engineers have most to say to the greatest numbers of men. So that finally in a moment of unfeigned optimism, Chase reposes all his hopes for the future in the engineer as a type. Here, as usual, his logic is sound. For if the engineer is not to rescue us from the industrial jungles, then the only salvation must be dynamite and a return to the middle ages of man. . . . But hold—the engineer who is so largely responsible for the vast scale, the colossal physical structure, the whole changed, shadowed complexion of twentieth-century society, he, the mute, inglorious king of this technological civilization, who should rule it worthily, has been too long but a yes man himself! He is a servant who labors humbly at the bidding of the mighty-in-credit. And it is now my firm conviction that even when President he seems to know his master's voice.

Clearly we have failed to manage our affairs in the interests of the total sum of human beings who compose the state. And in this crisis, to aid our calculations, Stuart Chase makes an interesting accounting of our tangible assets: immense plant equipment, capable of supplying ten times our needs (!) in almost every department; a plethora of natural resources; disgusting physical health; ingenious gifts for large-scale affairs. But against these assets there are the various liabilities which now seem to overshadow them entirely: inequal or fantastic distribution of income and goods; "overproduction"; technical demobilization of the clients of "overproduction"; racketeering (most expensive); an absurd credit system. So that for all solution we are urged to consider the establishment of a planned society in America.

The "assets" of Stuart Chase's approach to our most painful social questions are the freshness of his eye, his constructive enthusiasm, which is without bitterness, and above all, his excellent moral taste. (Note his rage, for instance, at loud speakers and detonating trucks, whose owners he would consign to long terms in prison.) "Have I been passing moral judgments?" he asks in mild dismay, at one moment. Certainly he has; and it is his excellent moral temper which gives the edge to his social criticism and his proposals for reconstruction.

The "liabilities" of his analysis, however, must lie in its not being *radical* enough: radical, I mean, in the original sense of going down to roots. Though probably an evolutionary or Fabian socialist at heart, Chase does not go far enough in his affirmations to carry him beyond the danger of absurdities. Thus, when he advocates a National Planning Board, it suddenly strikes us that men like Mr. Alexander Legge will probably be sitting with it. When he advocates the removal of the New York Stock Exchange (to Castle Garden?), we know well that against all movements which touch this institution's particular interests, divers powerful gentlemen will not remonstrate politely, but will fight to the end. On the one hand, Stuart Chase's tactics have the temporizing character of palliatives offered; and as such they will be unsatisfying and futile, so long as inequality of interest is not replaced by community of interest. On the other hand, when we examine such appeals for a "planned society" and imagine them carried out in detail, they strike us as being quite as seditious as calls for barricades. (There are whole regions and states in this country, I am sure, where a full understanding of all the implications of the "Nemesis" would lead to the suppression of the work, and probably of the author's person as well.) Logically to carry out the program of the progressives in the face of ponderous interests which, in the long run, flourish upon instability—this implies clearly a revolution of the most drastic kind, a social and moral explosion by which the old barriers of our Constitution may be razed.

The immediate weakness of all progressive programs, such as that of Chase, stares at us perplexingly: while not being *radical* enough, they fall between two horn , through being at the same time too radical, in the colloquial sense of the term. All but the word of nationalization is implied; yet the proposed measures, once actually embarked upon, would lead to this thoroughgoing solution in the end, since to stop at a half-frustrated capitalism would mean to invite the perpetual depression of England. Truly, we require a Ten Year Plan; but its first object must be the simple one of leveling economic inequality as far as possible. For we need not surface changes, but a new economy to inform, to revivify the whole American system.

This reviewer recalls from his own experience in Wall Street, seven years ago, the remarkable equanimity with which the wealthiest speculators seemed to endure a bear market. Indeed, it was all relative to them, much like the lamentable shrinkage in the late Mr. Baker's fortune from approximately $300,000,000 to approximately $75,000,000. We must remember that the most potent element among our citizens, guided by its own traditional interests as a class, still awaits quite calmly the end of this disagreeable period and the beginning of a new cycle, which is to be "muddled through" once more, and during which our unhappy financial leaders will have been pardoned for all the irritations of today.

MATTHEW JOSEPHSON.

Life in the Cotton Belt

The Forge, by T. S. Stribling. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

AFTER the self-appointed exile of the planting families to the towns and cities of the South following the Civil War, the next generation made a vigorous defense of the gentle tradition on the field of letters. The account of the grandeur, the romance, the high living of that feudal aristocracy consoled its progeny living in more constricted quarters. By showing the excellencies of the disrupted society, enough was gained in morale to make the losses in impedimenta bearable. But this literature spoke too little about the land and too much about the plate and the portraits—the land could not be carted to town—and so gave an incomplete story of the agrarian South. It ignored almost entirely the great bulk of the population, the plain people; and it failed to draw the nice distinctions between the different classes of slave owners, lumping them together

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in a formless type instead of drawing the individuals of the classes. Soon that fiction which was genuine, if incomplete, was covered by a mass of spurious novels, disguised journalism and tainted romance. The reaction to this was violent, but the reacting literature either ignored the provincial background in an escape to a Cabellian world of make-believe, or it distorted the background by social criticism whose standards were foreign and therefore impractical. It is to this last class that Mr. Stribling belongs.

By applying the standards of industrial America, Mr. Stribling set out in "Teeftallow" to expose the ignorance, the superstitions and the religious zeal of rural Tennessee, which still held, somewhat uncertainly to be sure, to its agrarian tradition. His heresy was more forthright in "Birthright," where he attempted to dramatize the educated Negro's problem from the Negro's point of view. This task did not baffle Mr. Stribling; he has passed from theme to theme with the facility of a journalist. And now, in "The Forge," the first of a series of novels, he has set himself the task of showing the upheaval of the entire Southern culture.

The story is about the Vaidens, a family living in north Alabama just before the Civil War. The author takes the different members, with their loves, adventures and ambitions, through war and reconstruction. As the Vaidens mingle with the neighbors, the whole life of the rural community is set forth, and the reader discovers there is a difference between the princely establishment of the Lacefields, where Ol' Pap's oldest son is overseer, and his own improvidently managed acres.

After a slow beginning the narrative moves with a great deal of vigor, but the Vaidens and their neighbors never become real people. Ol' Pap, his wife, the preacher and Polycarp are the most convincing; but their characters do not develop as the story develops. One has the feeling that the author is dragging them about to suit the convenience of his plot.

There are incidents and bits of characterization which ring true, such as the description of Ol' Pap's habits and the story of the old Negro woman who squats over the fire and saves the building with her urine; but these only accentuate the false tone of the treatment. A great part of the book takes place during the Civil War, and yet there is no evidence that the author has made any study of it. He jumbles together Shiloh, Halleck's move against Corinth and events that take place two years later. Augustus Vaiden goes to join Forrest's cavalry, then supposed to be fighting Sturgis, when Forrest was only a colonel and had never heard of Sturgis. This may appear factious criticism, but two years of war make a great difference in the character of soldiers and in the people's attitude toward hostilities. Incidents right for '62 are wrong for '64.

Toward the end of the book, Ol' Pap's youngest daughter runs off with a mountaineer. We are told he is a mountaineer, but without this label we should never recognize him as such. "Pardon," said the man from the hills, "I'm nervous . . . I'm terribly unstrung." This is twentieth-century tea-table slang and not the medium of expression for this man to use. Mr. Stribling has chosen for his subject a provincial, agrarian culture whose classes have definite places in society. There is variety to their habits, their tastes, thoughts and idioms, according to the variety of their labors, and only by presenting this variety can an author portray the upheaval of its civilization. This requires the right philosophical approach to the subject matter—something one feels the author does not have. Mr. Stribling has succeeded no better than the romanticists. This period in Southern history is rich in material, but the writer who understands the qualities peculiar to its provincialism and how the war brought about their decay is yet to appear.

ANDREW NELSON LYTLE.

The Physiology of Character

The Physical Basis of Personality, by Charles R. Stockard. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 320 pages. $3.50.

MAN HAS at last taken the center of the biological stage, as the typical biological specimen: the creature in which biological principles are manifested in their most pronounced form. Only a few years ago, to allude to man in connection with the general properties of biological material was to commit the crime of "anthropomorphism"; biologists as such did not know of his existence; all that was characteristic of him was foreign to biology, that purely mechanistic discipline. We have changed all that, to the great liberalization of biology and illumination of human nature. Stockard, anatomist, experimental embryologist, geneticist—and above all man with an eye, as Carlyle used to say—again places man in the center of interest in a thoroughgoing biological book, yet one written so that any intelligent man can read it. The question dealt with is: How do organisms—men, dogs and others—come to be what they are; how does it happen that they differ in personality, that each has his individuality?

Stockard illuminates this query from a study of the moving accidents that befall the individual in his long career of developmental adventure: first in becoming a single cell through the union of half-cells from his two parents; then in the tremendous enterprise of transforming this minute cell into a baby, a child, a man—or into a bird, a dog, a horse. At the beginning occurs the great lottery in which the individuals receive their endowments. Half of the father's endowment is taken at random, and combined with half the mother's, to yield a new combination that forms the capital with which the new individual is to do business. What he draws in this lottery does more to determine his personality and fortune than anything else that occurs. Stockard sketches the rules and results of these drawings—so-called Mendelian heredity—and emphasizes their fundamental significance. Then he shows this capital put into operation, drawing in accretions, transforming itself, in development. The main conditions required for its successful operation are proper temperature, proper amounts of oxygen, water and food. Stockard shows the manifold devices by which these conditions are supplied, in different organisms, culminating in the system of supply found in man and other mammals—an almost perfect system from the standpoint of the developing creature, but demanding sacrifice and suffering from one of the parents. He traces the results of imperfection or failure in the supply of any of these conditions, the imperishable marks that this leaves on personality; the interaction of the capital and the conditions, in the gradual upbuilding of the individual. He illuminates by experiment the great later effects produced by slight early differences in the conditions. This is the author's own field of work; here are shown the origin of personalities that are abnormal in slight or great degree, and the origin of many later differences between normal individuals. All this is occurring before the event that we call birth. The extraordinary effects of local and general arrests of development acting for a short time; the

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A BOOK OF ECONOMIC CHARTS

COMPILED BY A. A. JOHNSON

RUSSIA IS MARCHING UP A MOUNTAIN—A MOUNTAIN REARED BY EXPERTS—AND DREAMERS—ON GRAPH PAPER. ITS PEAKS RISE FROM THE SOLID BASE OF HER NATURAL RESOURCES TO HEIGHTS EXPRESSING THE UTMOST IN ENTHUSIASM AND NATIONAL WILL. THE MOUNTAIN—THAT PART WHICH LIES BEHIND AS WELL AS AHEAD, AND THE VALLEY OF WAR FROM 1913 ONWARD HAS BEEN SURVEYED AND CHARTED BY THE GOSPLAN. AND IT IS NOW POSSIBLE FOR AMERICANS TO SEE THESE EXTRAORDINARY GRAPHS AND TO EXPERIENCE THE THRILL OF WITNESSING A VAST ARMY OF AWAKENED PEOPLES MARCHING UPWARD "FROM LEFT TO RIGHT" ON PAGES OF STATISTICS. MR. A. A. JOHNSON, AN AMERICAN ECONOMIST, DERIVING HIS INFORMATION FROM THE GOSPLAN AND EMPLOYING RUSSIAN ARTISTS HAS COMPILED A BOOK OF REMARKABLE AND BEAUTIFUL CHARTS COVERING ALL PHASES OF SOVIET PROGRESS. BRUCE BLIVEN, IN LAST WEEK'S NEW REPUBLIC, CALLED IT THE MOST INTERESTING VOLUME HE HAD SEEN IN A YEAR. TO THOSE WHO REQUIRE READY REFERENCE TO THE FACTS ABOUT THE FIVE YEAR PLAN THE BOOK IS INDISPENSABLE. THE NEW REPUBLIC BELIEVES IT SHOULD BECOME WIDELY KNOWN AND FOR THAT REASON IS ASSISTING IN ITS DISTRIBUTION. COLLECTIONS OF ECONOMIC CHARTS BY MR. JOHNSON ISSUED TWO YEARS AGO SOLD FOR $65.00, AND LAST YEAR FOR $15.00. THE PRESENT, BY FAR THE MOST COMPLETE, HAS BEEN ISSUED IN A LARGER EDITION AND THE PRICE IS $6.00. ORDERS MAY BE ADDRESSED TO THE NEW REPUBLIC OR PLACED WITH YOUR BOOKSELLER.

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effects of transplanting parts, the alterations produced in one part of the body by changes in another, the action of the endocrine glands and their products in influencing development and personality—these are among the many topics illuminated, and in large measure from the author's own work.

The newest and most original part of the book is that dealing experimentally with the factors of personality in dogs. In no other animal is there a situation which so nearly parallels that found in man: a great set of diverse races, differing to a high degree in physical characteristics; and equally in those that manifest themselves in temperament, mentality, behavior. Owing to the expense and elaborate equipment demanded, the study of heredity and development in dogs has not gone far in the past. Stockard has an experimental farm where dogs are bred, the diverse races crossed, their heredity and diversity studied. In this book are given for the first time the important results of his extensive studies. Crosses of extremely different races—the bull dog with the dachshund, the great Dane with the St. Bernard, and the like, throw a most welcome light on the effects of interbreeding, particularly in connection with disharmonies and imperfections that may arise through the new combinations. The results of such crosses are described and figured through several generations. Parallels that are at least striking are shown, by description and figure, between certain marked types in the dog and man; and the author discusses the probable similar causes in the two. In chapter 15 he permits himself a perhaps somewhat speculative classification of human personalities into two main types.

Most biological books that are absorbingly interesting are unsound; most that are sound make laborious reading. Here we have a book that is both sound and entertaining; one which brings before the non-professional reader for the first time, in intelligible form, a body of biological relations that are of great significance for the understanding of the world and man.

H. S. JENNINGS.

An Irishman's Story

Traitor or Patriot? The Life and Death of Roger Casement, by Denis Gwynn. New York: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. 451 pages. $3.50.

THE HISTORY of a patriot develops curiously in the course of years; but Roger Casement's patriotism has probably received its final definition in Denis Gwynn's sober and thorough account. Robert Emmett's last words from the dock could thrill Irish-American schoolboys, fifty or sixty years ago, when they read them in their readers; Roger Casement appeared merely weak and ineffectual to an Irish-American commenting on Casement's pitiful but brave attempt to stop the Easter Rebellion. Casement stands isolated from immediate sympathy or immediate hate; he slips out of the categories even of "traitor" or "patriot." Rabid desire for the freedom of Ireland from British rule is not enough to explain him; or if that desire supplies the first impetus to his actions, his actions then take such obscure turns that the original impetus is lost sight of, and he becomes tangled for the mind, in a series of lonely, miscalculated attempts to gain an impossibly defined end.

It had not always been so with him. Casement had toilsomely disclosed, and by his disclosures broken, the reign of brutality in Belgian Congo. He accomplished, in some measure, the same task in his investigations of the rubber-trade slavery in Peruvian Putumayo. For this he was knighted, and the formal gratitude he expressed for the honor was made much of by the prosecution in his later trial for treason.

The treason he committed against the British Empire was only a little different in its general aim from the treason Benjamin Franklin committed when he went seeking aid for America from the king of France. Casement's act was a simple revolutionary tactic; he sought the aid of Germany during the last war for Ireland's freedom. What complicated his act, what rendered it a colossal failure, was the method he adopted. He proposed to the German government that he be allowed to seduce from their allegiance Irish prisoners of war, equip them with arms and uniforms and send them to fight England on Irish soil. It seemed simple enough to an Irishman who believed all Irishmen to be Irish, and not British, patriots. The gap between his belief and the actual nature of soldiers imprisoned among a people whose soldiers they had been so recently fighting would have been enough to wreck Casement's efforts. But, more than that, the German government distrusted him; they suspected him of being a spy; they disliked his Norwegian servant and confidant; they viewed with amusement his preoccupation with the deviltry of British diplomacy. And finally the Germans broke their word to Casement. To prevent the Easter insurrections in Ireland, to kill the Irish rebels' hopes for German aid, Casement boarded a submarine, landed on the coast of Ireland and was captured. He had hoped his capture would be like a distress signal to those preparing the insurrection, but even that attempt failed. Casement was tried and hanged for a traitor.

There are two quotations from Joseph Conrad in the book: one, from a letter to Cunninghame-Graham, upon Casement in the Congo; the other, on the title page, from "Lord Jim." And it is this Conradian imprint that the whole life of Casement seems to bear: "We are snared into doing things for which we get called names, and things for which we get hanged, and yet the spirit may well survive—survive the condemnation, survive the halter."

KENNETH WHITE.

Book Notes

PSYCHOLOGY

THE MEANING OF PSYCHOANALYSIS, by Martin W. Peck. *New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 273 pages. $3.*

This book is the outgrowth of lectures delivered to Harvard medical students. Its object is to state briefly the nature, origin and history of psychoanalysis and, as always in such books, the various points made are amply illustrated by clinical histories. The histories are well told from the point of view of the general reader, and the book may be recommended to serious students as a useful introduction to the subject.

NEW GIRLS FOR OLD, by Phyllis Blanchard and Carlyn Manasses. *New York: The Macaulay Company. 281 pages. $2.50.*

This study, by two members of the staff of the Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic, of the attitudes of modern girls toward manners, morals, work, recreation and marriage, makes it clear that the "nice" girl of the nineteenth century is now as dead as the Dodo, if indeed she ever existed outside of romantic imaginations. The value of this study is largely attributable to the fact that Miss Blanchard, being a practising psychologist of considerable experience, is able to incorporate in the book a considerable number of case studies, which supplement the information obtained by means of a questionnaire. The impression that the book leaves is that the modern girl, no less than her mother, hopes to find

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her chief happiness in marriage, with affection, a home and children as the outcome. But less than her mother is she willing to accept a sham for the reality; nor does she now believe that ignorance and inexperience are pathways to happiness.

Fiction

YEHUDA, by Meyer Levin. *New York: Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. $2.50*

Emotion swirls through these pages like the Kishon in flood—muddy, violent, vortical eddies of a passion that never falters. Levin is a reporter. He puts down, faithfully, the incidents of the struggle between pioneers and a recalcitrant environment. Though the pioneers are Chalutzim, labor Zionists, and the place is the valley called Esdraelon, the effort, in its physical aspects, is familiar. Spiritually, however, it has entered a novel phase. A faction of the colonists are not content to master nature. Not only must material obstacles be overcome, but the faults inherent in all known human societies must also be eradicated. They strive to create, with the same thrust, a new life and "the good life" from the ethical point of view. Consequently, the recurrent conflict is between the material necessities of the community and the idealistic, purely human dream of a good society. Levin does more than record this drama. From his wealth of material he selects such incidents as will project a larger significance. His most successful moments are collective: the lifting of the house, the threshing of the grain and the debate over Sonia, who has stolen to buy silk stockings and win the notice of her lover. The various personal dramas threading the narrative fade into the larger struggle; and the vanities of men seem small against that greater will to build which every member of the community, with one exception, shares.

Contributors

Lewis Mumford, author of a biography of Herman Melville and several volumes of criticism, has recently completed a study of the arts in America (1865-1895), which will appear in the fall under the title of "The Brown Decades."

Gordon Hayes, who has been professor of Economics at Ohio State University since 1920, is the author of "Our Economic System," a two-volume work published three years ago. He is a frequent contributor to political and economic journals.

Murray Godwin, whose interest in the American scene is colored by an even greater interest in the follies and vagaries of humankind, has written for a number of the left-wing literary magazines and is the author of an unpublished study of the life of Jesus.

Sidney Hook is a member of the department of Philosophy at Washington Square College, and the author of "The Metaphysics of Pragmatism," published by the Open Court.

Matthew Josephson, the author of "Zola" and "Portrait of the Artist as American," has completed a biography of Rousseau, which Harcourt, Brace will publish this fall. He is now at work on a brief portrait of himself as an artist of the late 'twenties.

Andrew Nelson Lytle, whose social and moral convictions have led him to embrace an agrarian career in north Alabama, is one of the contributors to the recently published symposium, "I'll Take My Stand," and the author of a biography of the Confederate cavalryman, General Forrest, which Minton, Balch will publish in June under the title of "Bedford Forrest and his Critter Company."

H. S. Jennings, who is a professor of Zoölogy at Johns Hopkins University and the author of "The Biological Basis of Human Nature," is a member of various scientific societies and a frequent contributor to zoölogical and physiological journals.

Kenneth White, at present free-lancing in New York City, is a poet, playwright and a contributor of dramatic criticism to The Hound and Horn.

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